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The Mataco Indians And Their Language

[Los Indios Matacos y Su Lengua]

By

Juan Pelleschi

Buenos Aires: 1896

Instituto Geográfico Argentino

Translated from the Spanish by Sidney Muirden

Human Relations Area Files

1959

Bulletin of the

Instituto Geográfico Argentino

(Argentine Geographic Institute)

published
under the Direction of the Institute's President

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Volume XVII

Buenos Aires

"Roma" publishing house 852-56 Cuyo street.

[title page]

1896

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Los Indios Matacos y su Lengua
[The Mataco Indians and their Language]

by
Juan Pelleschi (Engineer)
with an introduction by
Samuel A. Lafone Quevedo, M.A.

Part I

Preliminary Introduction

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Before Mr. Juan Pelleschi published his interesting and painstaking book "Ocho Meses en el Gran Chaco" [Eight Months in the Gran Chaco] the language of the Matacos was practically unknown, although it was common knowledge that many tribes spoke it. It is hard to understand how this language could have disappeared so completely without leaving so much as a trace in the archives of the Jesuit Fathers; but the fact is that even at the beginning of the past century Father Machoni himself *complained about the loss of grammars and vocabularies of the Tonocoté language, with which language I identify the Mataco-Mataguayo tongue [797] and which was the language used by the Jesuit missionaries to indoctrinate and evangelize these Indians.

In the early part of this century Hervás and Adelung, the former with his "Catálogo de las Lenguas" [Catalogue of Languages] the latter with his "Mithridates," were able to mention only the name of the language, as though to have on record that they were aware of its existence, but they lamented that they had been unable to secure a single fact in regard to it, not even a Pater Noster with which to illustrate their extremely sparse knowledge of this interesting group of languages spoken by countless Indians, (that is to say by Chaco Indians). The fact is that some time later the scholarly French traveler Alcides d'Orbigny, took

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[128]
Translator's Note: The Spanish word "cristiano" when used as a noun which literally means "Christian" has been translated throughout as "white man" or "white," since the translator feels that this is really closer to its basic meaning. "Non-Indian" might have been used instead but it seemed cumbersome and did not carry with it the tone of superiority which both "cristiano" in Spanish and "white" in English (however unfortunately) carry.

114 back to France a short but useful vocabulary of Vejoz, a dialect of the Matacos living near the river Zeta or Oran, but this [560] document remained in obscurity among that author's papers in the National Library of Paris until it was found by Mr. Luciano Adam, who was kind enough to send it to me at Pilciao.

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126 Without knowing anything about the language of the Mataco Indians, completely free from prejudice regarding both the Indians and their language, and intent upon finding out what he could at first hand, Mr. Pelleschi traveled into the Chaco in the manner which he so picturesquelly describes, capping his work with a linguistic treatise in which he re-discovered (may I be allowed the expression) the language of the Uicquii, whom we call Matacos and Mataguayos. The author cuts himself free from all preconceived notions as to grammatical rules of the "sum, es, fuit," type and writes down what he hears, not once, but a thousand times, until he discovers the part of speech to which, according to our way of thinking, the word he was treating corresponded, together with its other accidental characteristics. In the very same order in which he came upon them he sets them down in his travel notebook, in such a way that Mr. Pelleschi allows us to take part in his discoveries and we can delight with him in each new find.

000 Unfortunately for us the book was written in Italian. Doctor José Gutiérrez, friend of the author and warmly interested in these matters, had died, and there was therefore lacking one who would take an active interest in the book, which was, nevertheless, a revelation regarding the study of Argentine languages. Thus it was that the book remained of interest only to bibliophiles, among whom was General Mitre, and it is to him that I owe my first introduction to this meritorious and extremely interesting work.

After reading the book I resolved to make the author's acquaintance, since it dawned on me, in half an hour's perusal, that information of this type is not set down without copious notes, and I realized that there was an important drawback to the work, which was the lack of a vocabulary which might serve as background and complement to the Grammatical Essay covering the last few chapters.

It was not hard to find a mutual friend, and in 1889 there began a relationship which has yielded me many hours of real pleasure and satisfaction.

000 It is hardly necessary to say that as soon as the first polite conventional exchanges were over with, we plunged into the matter of our common interest, and that Mr. Pelleschi allowed me to see his portfolios, which I emptied of three quarters of their contents before retiring to my house at Pilciao in Andalgalá de Catamarca [561]. Ensconced there with my assistant and secretary Ramón Martínez, we set to work coordinating and ordering the vocabulary and sentence lists with an eye to publishing the result at some future date, always provided that the owner of the notes would permit such a thing.

Mr. Pelleschi and I used to see each other every so often, and when we were far apart, we would write. I used to urge him to publish something further, and he would promise to do so whenever his many occupations should give him respite. Later on we became involved in the politico-commercial occurrences of the years 1889 to 1893, and could only return to the matter at hand at long intervals. Finally, in April of the latter year, in odd moments, and amid other matters which concerned everything but linguistics, I was able to finish the outline of the work which is here published, with the introduction approximately as it now stands, but with Pelleschi's section lacking that fourth part which I had not yet copied.

All the manuscripts were sent to my friend Mr. Pelleschi and he pointed out the flaws contained in what I sent him.

The crisis of 1890 and the subsequent disturbances at the La Plata Museum had postponed publication of my papers on linguistics in the magazine put out by that institution and therefore all my material was held up, among which was our Mataco manuscript. Pelleschi also was busy with other prior commitments, railroad work, etc. In 1893 Mr. J. B. Ambrosetti, on behalf of the Boletín del Instituto Geográfico [Bulletin of the Geographic Institute], offered us space in that worthy magazine, and the work on material gathered on the subject of Argentine Languages went ahead. The schedule was to be as follows: The Lule Tonocoté [language] by Machoni, the Vilela [language] according to Pelleschi and others; and the Mataco Mataguayo group, the first part of which was to be Pelleschi's work.

When it came to Pelleschi's turn, he asked for more time, and so the manuscript remained in the files.

114 By pure chance it happened that in the interim three very important documents were brought to my attention, having to do with the Argentine Mataco as well as the Bolivian Mataco, and there was nothing for it but to use them to fill the gap left us by Pelleschi's missing work.

114 The first of those documents was the result of correspondence with the Fathers of the Franciscan convent of Tarija, and it was published in this same [562] Bulletin of the Geographic Institute under the name of "Nocten," by Father Inocencio Massei; the second document was the above mentioned one of d'Orbigny, and the third the Mataco of Father Remedi of the Salta Convent. All these works hark back to the notes made by the Missionary Fathers of the Seraphic Order, and are of great value because they stem from an extended stay among the Indians, and although the Indians are more or less reserved in matters of abusiones (1) as they call them, they are more apt to speak openly

1. Superstitions

to those wearing the habit of Saint Francis than to any other christian.

000 These monographs, as they were published, were sent to Mr. Pelleschi, partly because of the warm friendship we had for each other and partly because they might be of service, as the memories of La Madrid has been in the case of Paz's writings (2), in precipitating his

2. According to the version told me by Doctor Andrés Lamas.

work on the same subject. Let my friend say what he will, he must needs confess that these treatises inspired him, particularly when he compared them to his own notes, and found how well his observations agreed with them. The outcome was that we agreed to meet in the present year, 1896, in which he was returning from Europe and I was going down to Buenos Aires from my home in the Valle de Londres. Once having got together in this city we applied ourselves to the matter of our common interest for some eight or ten hours per week during a period of four months, until we were able to turn in the manuscript for publication.

Pelleschi had good reason not to wish to tackle the problem of his field notes alone—not that he was not capable of doing so if he set himself to it, but because it is a difficult matter to copy words such as these and distribute them properly without some intelligent help in the matter, for it all becomes confusion and doubt for one who does not have some sound principle to guide him.

126 One by one the words have been checked, the missing twenty five percent has been augmented, the Indians from whom different words and phrases were gathered have been designated with a distinguishing initial, and the unorganized notes on the Otto Mesi [Eight Months] have been translated somewhat more artfully, though under the author's guidance. This was really necessary for matters of reference.

I can say that both he and I have worked with real joy, and now that we are parting after finishing the work, it seems to me that I experience again the feeling which overcame me when I said goodbye to my University companions in the happy years which [563] I spent at Cambridge. I cannot dedicate this work to Pelleschi, nor he to me; but I am sure that he will not be opposed to our dedicating it to the unfortunate Larsen, pioneer in these matters, and the first to make Pelleschi's work known in this country.

Samuel A. Lafone Quevedo.

Buenos Aires, November 3, 1896

Historical References

I

127 If we were to affirm that the Matacos or Mataguayos are first mentioned in the writings of the Missionary Fathers, we would expose ourselves to correction when, at some future date, the archives of our motherland be better known. However, lacking such facts, and without having the work of Father Salinas at hand, I must necessarily begin by setting down what Father Techo says in his Historia de la Provincia Jesuítica del Paraguay [History of the Jesuit Province of Paraguay].

175 Refer to volume I, chapters 40 to 43 etc., which include the years 1590, 1591 and 1592.

In the first of these years Fathers Pedro Añasco and Juan Fonte arrived at Tucuman, at the same time that the famous and apostolic Father Alonso Bárcena was evangelizing the Lules, those on the slopes of (Mount) Aconguija, not those under Father Machoni's care. Father Bárcena, full of good works, toiled without ceasing among those belligerent Indians, underfed and in imminent danger of losing his life, but undismayed for all that, so much so that when called to order by his superior he answered with these noble and heart felt words [Latin parallel text omitted. See foreign text--Translator]: "I shall go to you as soon as possible, Father, and at your feet I shall say: Here I am; send me, be it that you return me to the Lules, or to the Calchaquies, to the Chaquenses or the Frontones, or to the uttermost ends of the earth, for I desire with an insatiable longing to be sent where I may suffer all things in behalf of those souls who are to be saved."

It is quite apparent here that the good Father differentiated between [114] Lules, Calchaquies, Chaquenses and Frentones. In my opinion the Chaquenses were the Mataraes, Matacos or Mataguayos who spoke the Tonocoté language. [564]

II

The Matará People

In chapter 41 Father Techo goes on to tell how the Spaniards founded the city of Concepción del Bermejo, 30 leagues from the point

M 175 at which the Bermejo river flows into the Paraguay, with the object of converting the numberless tribes which surrounded it. It was estimated that a hundred thousand Indians lived in the environs and Fathers Fonte and Angulo were their teachers. Almost all of the groups of Indians were Frontones, [Frente = Forehead--Translator], a name which was given to them because of their habit of shaving off the hair on the forward part of their heads.

These Indians hung clubs and handsful of arrows at their belts, and carried a staff or rod to which were attached many fish jaws, which looked like saws. They would go about naked, their bodies covered with paint to inspire terror. They were very jealous of their borders, and by way of warning they would hang the bodies of the enemies they had killed on trees. They were nomadic, and carried their camps from one place to another. [Latin parallel text omitted, see foreign text--Translator].

"Practically every group has a different tongue, and to such a degree does this variety reach that one can say that some eight languages are spoken on either side of the Bermejo river. And the greatest impediment in teaching these people is this variety of languages."

Many of these Indians must have belonged to those whom we call Matacos, yet not necessarily Frentones, since Techo says:- "Pooro gentem ferme hanc omnem ideo Frontones Hipani vocabant," which is the same as saying almost, but not all, were Frentones. That some must have been Matacos can be deduced from the end of Chapter 41: [Latin parallel text omitted, see foreign text--Translator] "But Barcena and Añasco, after leaving the territory of Tucuman, had reached the city of Concepcion, intending to establish themselves among the Mataráes; and from there, as circumstances might permit, to go to the Frentones and try to win them over."

It is quite clear from this that the documents which Father Techo referred to made a clear distinction between Mataráes and Frentones, since the former were Matacos and the latter Guaycurúes, i.e., Tobas, Mocovíes, Abipones, etc. [565]

III

M T 175 797

Description of the Mataráes - Chapter 42. Year 1591.

For many reasons it is here advisable to reproduce the Latin text [Latin parallel text omitted, see foreign text--Translator]: "The

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175 Matará nation, compared to the other neighboring tribes, is very
797 docile. They used to live scattered about in small groups, as is the custom of the Barbarians, until Alonso Vera, founder and Adelantado of Concepción, made them live together in a town, and had most of them baptized. Evil having become rampant however, it happened that they were unfortunate enough to have as their first Ministers of the Sacrament priests who were absolutely worthless, to the point that they were completely ignorant of even the most elemental mysteries regarding Christian matters. After receiving baptism, not one of the neophytes had ever practiced holy confession. Among almost seven thousand inhabitants many were unbaptized, some being children and some adults. The facilities of the place however were in no way pleasant, humanly speaking—drinking water, muddy and stagnant, was collected when it rained in holes dug in the earth by hand. Corn and a type of pumpkin was their sole food. But that awfulness, both of men and of the place, the great suffering, and the attempting of difficult things for Christ, far from discouraging the members of the Company who took on the task, served only to gladden them. And they, distributing the tasks among themselves and using the Tonocoté language, brought about in a short time, that no one among that whole populace live in concubinage, having anything to do with the superstitions of their forebears or dare, on Sundays or other holy days to be absent from the sermon or from doctrinal classes. Most of them, by dint of frequent confession, were free from all guilt and penalty, disciplined themselves rigorously each week and with the utmost reverence toward the Body of Christ, communed. All were under the guidance of teachers who taught them both publicly and privately those religious exercises practiced by christians of long standing, for the edification
M
C of the people." [566]

175 The mild Matáres put up with a great deal. And while the good
797 Fathers were evangelizing these docile catechumens, they were doubling their efforts in another direction, as Father Techo recounts in chapter 43 [Latin parallel text omitted--Translator]: "But that work was as nothing compared to the other undertaken by the Fathers when they exerted themselves in the learning of the several languages spoken by the Frentones. The Frentones being actually the reason for their coming, they must needs learn the language they used in order to be of any help to them. Thus it was that, in the course of a year and

M C
175 a half, Alonso Bárcena, an old man 65 years of age, on fire with zeal
797 to win souls for Christ, sharing his studies with Pedro Agnasco, learned
the Guarany, Natica, Quisoquina, Abipona, and Quiranguica languages,
and put together vocabularies, grammars, doctrinal teachings and
sermons, each for its respective use. Both of these men, before
leaving Tucuman, had mastered and worked out a grammar and
lexion of the Tonocoté, Kakana, Paquina and Quirandica languages,
so that the Fathers who might be about to enter districts where these
languages were spoken would have the way made easier. And in order
that their usefulness be more widely disseminated Pedro Agnasco
transcribed most of them many times, particularly the work which Alonso
M Bárcena had done, in a very neat hand, and, thus copied out, he gave
C them out for general use."

114 We have here a series of very interesting facts, for not only do we learn to distinguish between one tongue and another, but we discover also the origin of that valuable Toba MS, which is at present in General Mitre's library, attributed to Father Bárcena, and which actually is very neatly written, and was not in the least bit troublesome when a transcription of it had to be made for the series on Argentine Languages. The two famous notebooks, although hardly full enough to learn Toba from, are invaluable, because they allow us to see the Toba spoken in 1592.

The chapter referred to ends with a well deserved eulogy of Fathers Bárcena and Agnasco. How many evil things can be accounted to the expulsion of the Fathers of the Company of Jesus! To that event we owe the many gaps in the chain of American languages [567]. The confusion and loss of documents was widespread, calamitous and even down to the present day we are lacking those grammars of the Kaka and Tonocoté languages which are of so much interest to history, ethnology and linguistics.

IV

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The Mission to the Frentones, time lost and other Matará matters.

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Devoratis tot linguarum difficultatibus, says Father Techo in chapter 44. The missionaries began their efforts toward the Frentones via

M T 175 797 the Mogosnas and Naticas. "Verum (nevertheless), Deum immortalem, quo successu?" The Mogosnas had killed Francisco Vera de Aragon, the Frentones were in a state of great turmoil, and the Fathers had no other recourse but to return to their base mission among the Mataráes. On that occasion no good was harvested from so much effort expended on learning the languages of the Frentones; but linguistics as a whole did gain something, and once again the Fathers of the Company gave evidence that for them martyrdom was glory.

In 1596 Gaspar Monroy and Juan Viana visited the Tonocotés and traversed the territory previously evangelized by Father Bárcena. (Techo, "Historia de la Provincia Jesuítica del Paraguay," L. II, cap. 8). [Techo, History of the Jesuit Province of Paraguay, Vol. II, Chap. 8].

In 1608 Father Diego Torres essayed to traverse these districts, and regarding this journey Father Techo recounts the following in Book III, Chapter 28 [Parallel Latin text omitted--Translator]. "The state of the Frentones was a sad one, for they wished nothing other than to continue in their perverse customs, dominated by the enemy of the human race. And on seeing them spread out in their forays to the very frontiers of Perú, and on becoming aware that the Abipones, Matacos, Naticas, Mogosnas, and Tonocotés, nations related to the Frentones, were bound in the same captivity because of lack of priests, he felt himself constrained, following the example of Saint Xavier, to return to Europe and, in the Universities of Spain and Italy, to try by dint of exhortation to awaken among the students a feeling of compassion toward such peoples." [568]

M T 114 This quote is an important one, for even if we cannot be sure that Father Techo used the [Latin] term "agnatas" in its true and restricted meaning—relatives on the father's side—he has nevertheless given us a piece of ethnic-linguistic information of great importance and which he doubtless had from some well-informed person. If the Tonocotes, Mátaguas and Mataguayos are our present day Matacos it is clear that they must have had ethnic and linguistic affinities with the other nations of the Guaicurú type, as will later on be demonstrated.

The peaceableness of the Mataráes contrasted with the extreme fierceness of the Frentones is remarkable. This difference must be attributed to atavism, and from it we shall be able to derive something of interest, as will be seen later.

V

What Father Techo Says

M C 175

It is here necessary to transcribe fully chapter 15 of Book VIII, and year 1628, (1) at which time Don Felipe de Albornoz was governor of Tucumán, whose term of office is famous because it was then that the great uprising took place which resulted in the destruction of the city of Londres and its re-founding in the Valley of Poman (1633). [Latin parallel text omitted--Translator].

"The year 1628 was of note because of the Apostolic Mission which was to go out from Tucumán to the Chaco Indians. The Province of the Chaco holds within its borders an immense territory almost circular in shape, comprising the diocese of Paraguay, Tucumán, Río de la Plata, Santa Cruz de la Sierra, and also the archidiocese of Charcas. This Province is watered by rivers which have their birth in the mountains of Perú, and which after running their lengthy course empty into large lakes or into the rivers Paraguay or de la Plata. At the first appearance of the Spaniards many of the inhabitants of Tucumán and Perú migrated to that place, out of fear of the new regime, an affirmation which is bolstered by the fact that even today one can find there people whose language is Aymará, the vulgar (2) language of the Peruvians. The [569] better known nations are: The Taimvias, who used to occupy 188 towns, the Teutas, Mataguayos, Agoyas, Tobas, Yapitalagas, Mocovíes, Churumatas, Tonocotés, Abipones and several groupings of Indians who are different in language but not much in customs. Among these Indian nations there is not one which lords it over the other, rather, as is the custom among the Barbarians, are they organized in family groups and villages, and subject to their chiefs. The individuals who belong to that people, each in accord with the reigning superstition, choose out of several types of fish one as the patron and protector of their lives, which they worship so punctiliously

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1. Techo

2. Common

M C 175 that they would rather die of starvation than eat a morsel of a fish of that kind. They live in a state of perpetual war, both among themselves and with the neighboring nations, which seem terrible to the outsider more on account of their cruelty than of their scope." This is an invaluable statement for both the ethnologist and the filologist. The mention made of the Aymará tongue confirms what I have suspected regarding the linguistic contact between the Aymaras and the Chaquenses of the Mocoví type. It is a pity that the careful Father does not say who those Indians were who spoke Aymará.

Lozano recounts in Book IV, Chapter 1, the following: that about the year 1532 there was a great drouth in Tucumán. The doleful natives consulted their witchdoctors. These latter painted a grim picture of what was to come, and many, giving credence to these prophecies, went off "towards the Province of the Chaco, where their miserable descendants eke out an existence etc."

It is clear then that the tradition regarding those large migrations to the Chaco is one of long standing and acceptance; but that does not mean necessarily that all the Indians which are to be found there are the progeny of a single invasion. Above all else we must bear in mind what Garcilazo de la Vega says in his Historia [History].

C M 114 175 It appears that the Taimvias must have been the Lenguas, Payaguáes etc. who wore the button or "tembetá." This word probably derives from the Guaraní "tembé"—the lower lip—which is the one disfigured with these ornaments or lip plugs. Just as the term Orejones ["oreja" means "ear"--Translator] is applied to all those who use a disc or circular piece in that part of their anatomy, and Frentones are those who shave off the hair on the fore part of their heads, so also was the name Lenguas given to those who use lip plugs.

The Mosovias are the Moscovies, since "cc" [570] (strong guttral) becomes "s" by a process of degeneration; and that is why we find Father Tavolini spelling it Moscovitas.

Here again Mataguayo and Tonocoté tribes are brought together with others of the Toba-Mocoví type, with the warning, "diversitate linguarum quam moribus dissimiliores." This is a fact, as will be seen later; but I can say now, by way of anticipation, that it proves for us that the Mataco language is the result of linguistic hybridization in which the lexicon stems from one lineage and the grammatical usage from another.

VI

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Father Techo adds immediately that the Governor of Paraguay had attempted to force his way to Perú through the Chaco but had had to abandon the attempt because of Indian resistance. In the year that this event took place (1628) the Governor of Tucumán managed to get a foothold in this region and in his wake came the Fathers of the Company [of Jesus], on a mission to both Indians and Spaniards. The author continues [Latin parallel text omitted--Translator] : "A good many chiefs of different Indian grouping met with him there, and he came to an agreement with them regarding the sites on which were to be founded three towns, similar to those of Paraná. The estimated number of those whose language he knew was 50,000. Those who spoke the Mataguayo tongue were said to number 30,000. Neither did he neglect the language of the Tobas, Mocovíes and Zapitalagas, extraordinarily numerous nations, partly because many of these people clamored to be admitted to the Christian faith and partly because it was hoped that their territory might provide a springboard to further the advance into the provinces which lay beyond, which were even more extensive. He also tried to learn the Churumata language, which bears that name probably because the sound "chuchu" occurs so frequently in it. When Martín Ledesma, the Governor, continued on his march to found another city on the banks of the Solota (1) river, our Osorio remained [571] among the Tobas for the purpose of fixing upon the site for a new town in which to bring together and convert the Barbarians, and from that place, writing to the Provincial, he said that there was need for the founding of three towns in the territory of the Tobas, Mocovíes, and Zapitalagas, if enough Fathers could be found for the purpose. He added that the Indians of the interior were so tall that he could hardly reach their heads with his raised hand."

One can see from this how numerous the Indians of the Mataguayo nation were, and also that the Tobas were always near them, a phenomenon which continues to be true to this day.

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1. Socotonis or Esteco (?).

Choco Indians SK4
Tonocote SI13

VII

T 175 We take a jump forward now to the year 1641 and Book XIII, chapters 4 and 5 of Techo's work. There we see that Father Juan Pastor, Rector of the Colegio de Esteco [Esteco School], with another priest, penetrated the Matará country to a distance of 80 leagues from Esteco. Following which we are told that these Indians were much addicted to drunkenness: they were in the habit of holding "circular" orgies, each taking turn in inviting the others.

These were the two-day drinking bouts—there were others which lasted longer and were called "honors," and were held in honor of their ancestors toward the end of the year, the object of which was to drink as much as possible. The guests presented themselves in line and offered the host of the party an ostrich which a beautiful girl carried on her head. And if the obsequies were in honor of more than one dead person, the ostriches were equal in number to the number of the deceased.

The host was obliged to give a small present to the owner of each ostrich, with the prior condition that the latter would repay in kind—and from the breaking of this pact grew the bloodiest fights. The obligation affected not only those present but also their children and grandchildren in the direct line.

After three days of funeral feasting they would weep for a whole hour, and then would start to laugh loudly, to dance and to participate in the general orgy. And the worst of the matter was that those people called themselves Christians and boasted that their forebears [572] had been catechized by the apostolic fathers Alonso Bárcena and Pedro Añasco.

The custom referred to of presenting ostriches at funeral ceremonials is extremely curious, since at interments in the Calchaquí region we found the "surí" or ostrich used as an ornament on the burial containers, a fact which can be verified at the Museo Nacional [National Museum] and at the Museo de La Plata [Museum of La Plata].

C M 175 From being among the Mataráes Father Pastor went over to visit the Abipones, and when he was surrounded by them he spoke to them in "Tonocotan and Guaraní" and the result was so far favorable that he was able to open the mission.

Two years later (1643) we find that the missions were advancing into Matagua and Mataguayo territory. Book XIII, chapter 24. We also

C
M read in the same place that the most commonly used language in the
175 Chaco was the Tonocoté, that it was not Toba or the language of Cuzco, for it says there that "Father Juan Oloris knew the language of the Incas, and was learning Tonocoté, which was the language of the Chaco mission."

VIII

What Father Lozano Says

M What precedes has been extracted from the work of Father Techo.
114 I shall now do likewise with the Descripción Chorográfica [Chorographic
128 Description] of the Chaco written by Father Lozano and published in Córdoba in 1733.

This author retold most of what Father Techo had written in this regard, but also added many details of interest which illustrate the former text and serve to eliminate some doubts. In this chapter I shall set down all that Lozano has said about the Matacos or Mataguayos, and the references will be to the pages of the book written by this priest.

Speaking of the Paraná river, page 25, he says: "The region which this great river waters in the Chaco is inhabited by the infidel Abipones, some Mocovíes who fled from the Salta frontier, and the Callagaes, who at one time used to be called Mataráes."

Father Lozano devotes pages 39 and 51 to recounting the tradition, which he relates in his history of Tucumán, [regarding Indian migration under Spanish pressure--Translator] to explain the cause for the Chaco's dense population. Undoubtedly the Chaco was the apparent refuge [573] for the more belligerent Indians and for those in revolt, and it is probable that what was happening then was a repetition of the numberless previous migrations of a like kind. Those who were dissatisfied and answered to the Inca also fled to the Chacos.

M On page 51 Lozano gives a list of the nations inhabiting the
175 Chaco from which I shall extract the following by reason of its being relevant to this study: "Mataguayos ... Amulalaes, in times past called Matarás ... Tonocotés ... Chunipies ... Callages ...

"On the river Pilcomayo, at a distance of 40 leagues from the Andean mountains live the Tobas and Mataguayos, the two nations numbering about 4,000 members and who are eaters of human flesh." (page 53). As ever the Tobas live as close neighbors to the Matacos.

M
175 "Some 60 leagues from the mountains, the marshes of the Pilcomayo River, in the direction of the river Bermejo, are peopled by numerous Tonocotés and Lules who drew away from the territory of Tucumán at the time of the appearance of the first Spanish conquerors." (page 54)

"The nation which lives on the other side of this one (the Teuta) (1)

> 1. Possibly from "teuj-taj," meaning "big river," the Mataco name for the river Bermejo.--J. Pelleschi.

is the Mataguaye nation, which is the one closest to Jujuy." (page 76)
"Some are called Mataguayes Coronados and others Mataguayes
M
191 Churumatas. The Coronados speak Guaraní, although this is not their mother tongue. The Mataguayes Churumatas understand and speak several tongues, such as Quichoa [sic], Guarany [sic] and Ocloya which they pick up from the captives which they hold as prisoners in their territory. They also understand the language of the Tobas. These
M
175 Mataguayes were distributed in the following fifty towns: Neantiche,
621 Mocoy, Collemage, Auncapinhe, Hucohas, Hocohá, Oyaha, Natetehá,
103 Chinitiohé, Onin, Anuyguay, Alesnuy, Chayabo, Chioquiose, Hucoha, Chayquehé, Chachinamí, Pelo, Cahotochin, Nacalgoy, Chenesse, Halcacha, Cheneschá, Peque, Nitilinquin, Guays, Guocopa, Hucuchinami, Tiuquiahó, Hocalá, Leguelsehá, Oyaho, Carininquin, Yantis, Luguarache, Neglisehé, Loquelesse, Queyshé, Cotonhá, Tapela, Onoralgualache, Poytin, Hopitata, Hopitahé, Tatotehé, Lechonehá, Lohoteá, Tactoy, Apagatin, Rimpihá." (page 76)

Not one single time do we find the ending "gasta," although
194 something similar to "a" and "aho" does appear. A negative proof must not be given undue importance, yet it ought not to be completely ignored [574].

IX

The Description of the Mataguayos etc. continues

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M
175 "All these nations which we have mentioned with their towns, that is: Taynuyes, Teutas, Mataguayes, Agoyas, Xolotas, Tobas, Mocobies, Yapitalaguas, and also Aguilotes who live among the

C
M
175 Mocobies, and the Palomos, which are almost at an end, all have the
same customs, and are similar in every way, which is the reason for
our lumping them together in order to speak of them as a whole, without
differentiating between one and another. All are Caribs, eaters of
human flesh, abominable in the extreme, untrustworthy and much given
to warring, which flares up amongst them easily. They sometimes
fight against the Guaycurús, and do so continuously against the Spanish
although in their attacks upon the Spaniards they are more like thieves
than soldiers for they never face them but rather attack by surprise and
by ambush, making very sure before doing so of the enemy strength by
C
M means of spies. These latter are tireless in their spying and will keep
175 watch upon the Spanish positions for a year or two or three, observing
726 everything very carefully under cover of darkness, to see whether they
will meet with resistance or not, and until they are absolutely sure of
their superiority, they bide their time; so when they do attack one can
be sure that the result can be but one, and that there is no danger in it
for them. These spies creep about at night on all fours, so that their
elbows are covered with callouses, and they never attack, since they
are alone, and if they are heard they scurry away with great ease, and
some with the help of magic take the shape of some tame animal in
order to go about their spyings more easily. Although they will not
openly face the Spanish, they will, when escape is impossible, fight
valorously, and sell their lives dearly, as can be seen every day and
as was experienced five years ago by an officer commanding the regiment
of the city of Santiago del Estero who, coming upon five Mocovíes
in the forest, surrounded them with his men, but they resisted bravely,
wounding many Spaniards before dying, and the last who remained
alone with his wife, continued to keep up the battle, his wife supplying
him with arms, and would not give himself up until he was riddled
C with bullets, having first wounded many Spaniards with his arrows, the
M commanding officer almost mortally. The weapons which they all use
175 [575] are arrows, clubs and darts, which they fashion expertly from a
411 certain hard wood. Their darts are very long, about 15 hand breadths,
and very heavy, but they use them with great dexterity and agility.
The head is made from the antlers of deer, and is not firmly embedded
in the shaft but rather is loose and has a small cord tied to it so that
when the dart is jabbed into the body of an enemy and the shaft quickly
snatched out, the point remains in the wound and the enemy kept from
escaping by means of the cord, for the lance head cannot be pulled

C M 175 411 [717] from the body without making the wound much longer because a barb is carved into it and this impedes its being drawn out. If they have time they invariably decapitate those of their enemies whom they wound in battle, and they do this with great dexterity as they find the joint between the vertebrae in a moment and sever the head with one slash of their knives made from the jawbone of the "palometa" [a vicious type of fish which also goes by the name of "piraña"--Translator]. After the head has been severed the scalp is removed and then stretched and dried, and kept in order to celebrate their more important fiestas and to demonstrate their bravery.

C M 175 492 "They used, in the old days, to go about on foot, but they have since become great horsemen having stolen large numbers of horses from the ranches and towns of the Spaniards. From the city of Santa Fé alone and in the space of only 20 years they have made off with some 15,000 horses. That is why they are such good riders today, surpassing the Spaniards. Running after a fleeing horse and using only their lances to help them off the ground they will leap upon it and mount either from the side or from behind. They do not use stirrups and their saddles are very meager affairs, so much so that they often ride saddleless, but so swiftly that only rarely can the Spanish overtake them for they make their horses fly by whipping them with a three tailed lash which they always carry with them. When on the warpath they are happy with but skimpy rations which each carries for himself, and they make fun of the many preparations which the Spaniards make since they, with a small amount of half-grilled meat and whatever they can glean from the countryside in the way of fruit or other things undertake treks of a hundred leagues to wage war, their bed being the hard ground or at most a stiff cowhide. But this is nothing unusual for them since their beds are hardly of better stuff when they are at home.

C M 175 513 554 "These latter are made of straw which is spread all over the floor of their habitation which, although low-ceilinged, is very long in order to allow room for the whole family group to stretch out, each family having its own fire in the center. The oldest lies down [576] at the head in the place of greatest prestige and then, on either side, his sons according to age, followed by the grandchildren and other descendents, each with their families in such a manner that the way in which they lie down to sleep is a living representation of the family tree. They have no covering other than the branches and grasses with which they thatch their hovels, and in which a fire burns continually. The most Important family member may have a mantle of deer or nutria skins to keep him warm.

000 The most important family member may have a mantle of deer or nutria skins to keep him warm.

C M "The men usually go about stark naked without a stitch on,
175 although their skins are so tanned by the rough weather that they
291 seem to be covered by animal hide or leather, particularly the old men, who are numerous, because the inclemencies of weather do not harm them, they having been used to such rigors since childhood. I saw in Santa Fé the head of a Mocobí Indian, who must have been about 40 years old, the skin of which was more than half a finger thick. The women go about entirely covered, from head to toe, in animal skins, and the principal women attire themselves in cloth made from a pliant plant larger than the agave, which in this province is called "chaguar" and grows wild. From it they make a thread similar to that used by cobblers, and then weave their clothes to which the daughters and wives of the more important men add some black and
C M white ornamentation. From this same fibre they also make jars which,
[445] cemented over with wax, can hold water pretty well and also the beverages with which they get drunk.

C "All the women paint their faces, breasts and arms in the
M same manner as the moorish women of Africa and Spain, and those
302 175 of most consequence do this in intricate patterns which remain in
[304] the skin permanently, for their mothers from the day they are born start to fix the dyes in their very flesh with the help of the large sharp bones of certain fish. They also use a dark blue dye, although not to such an extent, on their male children. In addition to this the mothers pluck the hair from the heads of their children of both sexes, leaving a completely bald swath three fingers wide running from the forehead to the crown of the head on which the hair never grows again. Thus do the Mocobíes, Tobas, Agoyas, Taymies and Aquilotes go about, both men and women, and the latter are extremely ugly as a consequence although, to their thinking, they are very beautiful. And in order that the women pull their hair out, the Devil is wont to appear to them in the form of an Indian woman who comes out of the nearest forest covered with a net and tells them that those who will not allow themselves to be plucked are not to eat fish, for should they do so, they will die. [577] So that if some
C M woman, fearing the pain, resists having her hair pulled, she later
[262] allows it so as to be able to eat fish which is their favorite food. Others of these Indian nations do not make these pathlike inroads in

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M their hair but rather pull out all the hair on the fore part of their
302 heads, about four fingers in width. And some of the Mataguayes
175 tear out the hair from the center of their heads, forming a sort of crown, which is why they are called "coronados" ["crowned ones"--Translator]; the Mataguayes Churumatas, on the other hand, have the same coiffure as the Tobas and Mocobíes.

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M "While the men, at nighttime, occupy themselves with roasting the flesh of their enemies over a fire in order to give them a
175
72] rational grave in their brutish bellies, the old crones, who are mostly
[266] witches and are venerated as priestesses, are usually present and sing all or most of the night of victories over their enemies or doleful songs about the dead. But if they have had bad fortune in war not a word is heard on their return in all the hamlets or villages which had a part in the misfortune, a strict silence being observed as a sign of sadness and all is attributed to sundry omens. They continue in this melancholia for some days until, little by little, they start to forget and begin to come out of their shacks. Then the relatives of the dead begin to incite the others to vengeance; and it is an inviolable law that those relatives are to lead the others, exposing themselves to the greatest dangers; but they are not to return to the place in which they suffered the defeat because, as they imagine, if they fight there they will certainly be overcome once more.

C
M
175 "They do not grow crops but live entirely on what they hunt and
[241] fish, to which end they wander through the forests and along the rivers.
[273] On returning home the common thing is to get drunk with wine which they make from wild honey or from the pods of the algarrobo. Their drunkenness lasts until they run out of provisions at which time they sally forth once more. If they should have a free moment they devote it to making weapons for war. Some of them, such as the Mocobíes
C
M and Aguilotes eat, in addition to what they hunt and fish, roasted or
175 boiled locusts. In all other things the men of every one of these
462 Indian nations make the women work for them, and this is quite hard
[482] for they (the women) must cut firewood and take it home on their shoulders even if they are also suckling a child. They must also fetch water from the river. In all things the men are hard on their women, to the extent that when on the road the husband will ride a horse while the wife and young child [578] must go afoot. Nor is the mother more tender towards her child for as soon as it can use its legs she makes it walk so that she may carry the dog, who keeps them company, in her

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175 arms. It is true that all this work which the Indian women must per-
462 form is made more tolerable by the fact that they are very strong and
[84] robust. Proof of this robustness is what they do as soon as they give
birth: going to the river or stream with their newborn child they go
into the water and swim about and wash themselves thoroughly, and
do not experience the least harm as a result. However, should the
husband capture a woman from some Indian nation or from among the
C
M Spaniards, her life is spared so that she may serve his wife as a slave,
[595] and him as a concubine—but he must be secretive in his relationships
with the captured woman for the wives are extraordinarily jealous and
will make things difficult for the husband should he make advances
C
M towards a Spanish woman.... .
175 "Smallpox is a great scourge to these nations, and makes
[164] terrible inroads into them because they have no doctors other than the
C old fakers, and if the latter do not cure the sick person, and they
M usually don't, then all will abandon him to his fate. When anyone dies,
[764] those who happen to be present open up a grave for him on the very spot,
bury him stretched full-length, stick a spear into the ground over his
resting place and hang a Christian's or some other enemy's skull on the
C shaft's end; then they desert the place and never return to it while
M memory of it lasts. Not even a trace of religion has been found among
[771] them, rather are they perfect athiests without the least knowledge about
the afterlife or the immortality of the soul. They have a certain re-
C
M spect for their female witchdoctors, more out of fear of what they may
175 do to them than from any good they may hope to receive from them.
756 These witchdoctors try to make the others believe that they hold in
their hands the power to heal or to make sick, and these are the ones who
resist the Gospel most vigorously, using their influence to keep their
followers from receiving Holy Baptism or allowing their children to re-
ceive it, and persuading them that baptism will kill them. To this end,
to bolster their arguments, they take advantage of what happens in any
mission post when the missionaries only baptize those who are about to
die, and as the Indians then usually see such a person die, the noxious
error becomes more firmly rooted in their untutored minds." "Descripción
del Chaco" [Chorographic Description of the Chaco] page 82.

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M This account by the Missionary Fathers is confirmed by what has
114 been observed by travelers who have visited these same Indians in more
modern times, even in the present day. [579]

X

More on the Matarás and Tonocotés

175 The previous chapter has been an excessively long one, but only thus could Father Lozano's description be rounded off.

Following, I shall extract a little more from pages 89 and 94:

"Following the Bermejo River, and traveling on the banks of the Paraná in a southerly direction one comes to the territory of the Abipón nation. In times past it was a numerous one, for in a single town belonging to this people close to the city of Concepción, Father Juan Fonte, one of the first laborers in this Province, found upward of 8,000 souls, and in the Matará or Amulala nation which was eight leagues away from the same city, he found a town of over 7,000 inhabitants, and it is a known fact that there were more than 10,000 Indians in the vicinity of the city of Río Bermejo. At the present time they live in a Christian town of the Matará nation in the jurisdiction of Santiago del Estero. The remainder, together with the Abipones—who are not as numerous as they used to be—amount to a good number of Indians and have almost ruined the city of Santa Fé of Vera-cruz. At the present time they are called Callagaes, but previously their name was Abipones.

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797 The last nation of the Chaco, of which we have not yet spoken, is that of the Lules or Tonocotés, which are divided into Big Lules and Little Lules. The Little Lules are the ones who actually hold to the name Lules, for the Big Lules are again subdivided into Toquistinés, Iseistinés and Oxeistinés, and Big and Little Lules are very much at odds with one another. Their ancestors 140 years ago were Christians, converted and settled in a town by Saint Francisco Solano their first Apostle, and taught and nurtured by the Venerable Father Alonso de Bargana of our Company. They were organized into a number of Encomiendas [work groups--Translator] for the benefit of the city of Talavera de Madrid, commonly called Esteco. However, alienated by the bad treatment and constraint they received at the hands of their masters, they revolted, killed one of their overseers and returned to their old haunts in the forests, which are arid places, so lacking in water that the Spanish could make no headway in them. These Indians [101] live between Tucumán and Salta, downstream from the Balbuena River, although other Tonocotés pushed on into the Chaco." [580]

175 I shall return later on to this matter of confusing Lules and Tonocotés.

On page 113 and following, Father Lozano repeats what we found in Father Techo, and establishes the fact that the Matarás of the Bermejo River region "spoke the Tonocoté language."

Father Gaspar Osorio in a letter which is transcribed on pages 174 and 175 says, among other things, the following:

"Together with a multitude of other Indians called Mataguayes, a humble and strange people who have no fixed place of abode—all these, in company with a very large group called Nataguayeos speak the same language although they differ in a few words ... further down are the Tobas ... and still further the Mocovies, Yocalaiuies—but I must inform you, Father, that all these infidels are not in the Chaco proper but only on its perimeter. In the Chaco, according to the people of Tucumán, live the Tonocoté Indians who fled from this territory when the first Spanish conquerors arrived ...

[241] "The latter are agriculturalists and sow their crops in the low country adjoining the Pilcomayo River, near which river and also close to the Yabibirí River live the people of the Chaco who are different from the aforesaid Tonocotés—a veritable 'mare magnum' of Indians."

On pages 186 and 187 Lozano tells that Father Cerqueyra used to hear confession from the Matará Indians (100 leagues from Santiago) in the Tonocoté tongue.

[266] Further on, on page 196 Lozano again refers to the Mataguayes as "fierce" and "eaters of human flesh." From the middle of the seventeenth century the Tonocotan nations began to disappear from the Chaco scene and in their place the Mocovíes, Tobas and Abipones became progressively more formidable for the Spanish colonies. The following paragraph is found on page 230: "... among 500 families who happened to come together as a group, four completely different [191] languages were spoken: Mocoví, Toba, Malbalá, and Mataguay. Actually, in the interior of the Chaco other very different languages used to be spoken, and by much larger groups of people, for these frontier Indians are only the scanty remains of great nations which have consumed each other, hunting each other out like wild beasts. Their language is barbarous, which is to be expected from so irrational a people, and added to this difficulty is the fact that they (apparently

175 by the devil's persuasion) speak their minds in such a bare fashion and with such a paucity of words, eliminating the syllables, that it is extremely hard to follow their thinking."

In this way all report of the Tonocotés peters out, there being only a little more concerning the Mataguayos, and that not very complementary. [581]

XI

What Father Machoni Says About the Tonocotés, Date of Writing: 1732

Father Machoni Starts His Lule Grammar in this Way: To the Reader

175 797 "The language which this grammar teaches is not one in general use, but it is nevertheless the language of five very numerous nations of Indians: Lules, Isistinés, Toquistinés, Oristinés, and Tonocotés. The number of persons belonging to this last group is about 60,000. A little over a hundred years ago these five nations lived in their respective towns in the vicinity of two Spanish cities. The Tonocotés lived adjacent to the city of Concepción, at the time of this writing destroyed, but which at that time was located on a lake (1) not very far from the Bermejo or Great Chaco River. The Holy Gospel was preached to them by ... , but all was spoiled by the Spaniards whose ill-treatment of the Tonocotés caused them to retire into the Chaco, making their headquarters on the banks of the Jabibiri and Pilcomayo Rivers."

This is not much by way of information, but at the same time it supplies us with the only argument in support of the thesis that the Tonocoté of the Reverend Bárcena was the Lule of Father Machoni.

175 A little further on the author adds the following: "If I had had the grammar and vocabulary list of the language of these Indians which Father Alonso de Bárzena [sic] composed over a hundred years ago when

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1. Lake Cangayé

Tonocote SI 13
Chaco Indians SK4

T 175 he evangelized the Tonocotés and Lules—which grammar, not having been printed, has disappeared entirely, there being merely knowledge of the fact of its having existed because of its mention in the biography of this Apostolic missionary ..."

When I treat the language of these Indians I shall return to this piece of information set down by the good Father; but for the time being I shall refer only to the actual nations—not to the language—giving their names and geographic location, although Machoni in a way confuses these two things [language and nation--Translator]. [582]

XII

What Abbot Jolis Says in His Account of the Chaco

In 1789 Abbot Jolis published his interesting account of the Gran Chaco, of which only the first volume saw the light. From this treatise I shall translate a few passages (for it is in Italian), starting on page 390.

Our Abbot starts out by making fun of the assertion that there were 60,000 Tonocotés—which Father Machoni had said lived on the banks of the Yabibirí River, between the rivers Verde and Pilcomayo—and goes on to say what follows: "Desirous of making sure of the existence of the so-called Tonocotés, I made quite searching inquiries of many Indians of several nations, both of Perú and of other localities who lived towards the South and East and who had wide knowledge of the whole Chaco area since they were expert guides, but I was not able to come across even one who knew anything about such barbarians, unless they were those well known ones who go by another name, which is "Casó," but these certainly fall far short of the number which Lozano C gave for them."

T 175 A little further on, on page 392 he expresses the following, ever critical of Father Lozano: "In the catalogue of the various nations he mistakenly lists the Lules, the Isistines, Toquistines, Oristinés, and Tonocotés, when they are actually tribes of the same nation. He is also mistaken with regard to the Tobas, Aquilotes, Palomos, Orejones and Callagaes whom he classifies as separate

C T 175 nations when they are all really members of only one nation: the Toba; just as the Chinopies, Pasaynes, Guacaes, Atalalaes, Ocoles, Umuampas, Hipas, Yecoonitas and others of like race all belong to the Vilela nation, although each has its head or chief and lives in separation from the others. In this way was he able, not without a semblance of truth, to assert that the nations of the Chaco were without number; but he had no business transplanting to that region other more civilized nations from Perú, or less civilized ones from Tucumán.

"The nations which actually do exist in the Chaco are: [583] Chiriguanos, Matacos, Mataguayos, Tobas, Vilelas, Mocovíes, Abipones, Lules, Mataraes, Yapitalagas, Albayas or Guaycurúes, Guanas and Payaguaes."

Except for the Lules and Mataráes, Jolis says that these nations continue in their heathen ways.

T 175 191 As for the remainder, Jolis' description of the Mataráes agrees more or less with what Fathers Techo and Lozano tell us, but he ends with a piece of important information which is original to him and can be read on page 451 in which he tells that the Mataraes, when he retired from the country, numbered some 700 or 800 souls and lived in a little town called Matará, 36 leagues east of Santiago del Estero, bound in service to the noble Ureyola family, and he ends with these words regarding the Mataráes and Mopás: "What I know very well is that neither group speaks the Tonocoté language any longer but only the language of Cuzco, that is, of Perú."

This is a somewhat strange piece of information. Be that as it may, Father Jolis' observations regarding what Fathers Lozano and Machoni tell us, together with Abbot Hervas' judgement on the same matter, will serve to excuse me if I also reject the identification of Machoni's Lules and the Tonocotés of the Jesuit Missions.

Father Jolis was in charge of the mission station at Macapillo in 1767 among the Pasainis, who belong to the Vilela nation. Naturally, his testimony is very important.

XIII

What Abbot Hervás Writes Regarding the Tonocotés

M 175 Abbot Hervás published his Spanish edition of the Catálogo de las Lenguas [Catalogue of Languages] in 1800. What he says in volume I

1: Pelleschi--27 C-5 (ca. 1875) 1896 SI7 Mataco SI7
Vilela SI 14

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175 page 164 and following is so to the point that I must needs quote it in its entirety.

"The Mataguayo tongue is spoken by a quite populous nation, the most villainous in the whole Chaco, located between 21° and 24° of latitude and 315° to 317° of longitude, bordering on the territory of the Chiriguanos. The Indians of said nation are known to the Spaniards by the name of Mataguayos, a name taken from the Mataguayo tribe which used to do their agricultural [584] labor for them and also be useful in trading. The other tribes of the Mataguayo nation were known later as time went on under the names of Agoyas, Tentes, Tainoas (or Tainuzes), Palomos, Ajotas, Tañis (it is conjectured that this last tribe belongs to another nation). These names are no longer used, their place having been taken by the following: Mataços, Hueshuos, Pesatupos, Abuchetas, Imacos, etc.

M
[197] All the tribes speak the same language with some small differences, as reported by Abbot Joseph Araoz, resident in Faenza, who was a missionary to the Mataguayos and compiled a grammar and a vocabulary of their language some forty years ago. However, by reason of the great length of time elapsed and owing also to his very advanced years, he no longer remembers the language which he has not attempted to keep in mind as it was useless to him under the present circumstances in which blessed Providence has placed us. The aforementioned Mr. Araoz put forth a great deal of effort together with other missionaries
M
[197] towards the conversion of the Mataguayos, of which 100 were added to the Chiriguano mission station called Rosario. No small number of Jesuits, both in the past century and in the present one have striven for the conversion of the Mataguayos, but with no other result than that of martyrdom, as is recounted in volumes IX, X and XXIV of Father Charlevoix's Historia del Paraguay [History of Paraguay].

V
175 "The Lule tongue, simple in its construction and different from the other American tongues, (of which I have any knowledge or whose grammatical elements I have read) is spoken in two Jesuit mission stations in the Chaco. These places, which are called Miraflores and Valbuena, belong to the diocese of Tucumán and stand on the banks of the Salado River, near the 25th degree of latitude and between 313° and 314° of longitude. Valbuena lies east of Miraflores, about twelve
V
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114 leagues. Father Machoni, in his Lule grammar printed in 1732 (from which I have extracted the grammatical compendium which I shall publish) gives a brief account of the nations that used to speak the Lule

Vilela SI 14
Tonocote SI 13

V
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114 language. But as his report does not jibe with what can be read in the accounts on the same given by Fathers Techo, Lozano, and Charlevoix, I have deemed it wise to beg Abbot Camaño to help me by making diligent inquiries among the missionaries to the Lule nation, who are yet alive and reside in Faenza, and let me know their opinion regarding the mission stations where Lule is spoken in order that I may compare what they say with the opinion of Abbot Joseph Ferragut, resident of Rábena, [585] who has been a missionary to the Indians which, according to Machoni, descend from the Lules. With the help of these documents I have been able to perceive certain errors in Machoni's reports regarding the nations which speak the Lule tongue; and so that these errors may be recognized, I shall transcribe—before confuting it—the information which is contained in the initial section of Machoni's Lule grammar:

[The name "Tonocoté" is consistently spelled "Toconoté" in the following pages--Translator.]

"The Lule tongue," says Machoni "is common to five populous nations called, Lule, Isistiné, Toquistiné, Oristiné and Toconoté [sic] all of which, more than a hundred years ago (that is, since the year 1600) were converted and lived in settlements."

II

T
175 "The Toconoté nation used to number almost 60,000 persons and was clse to the city of Concepción which stood on a lake a little distance from the Great Chaco River, known today as the Vermejo. The other four nations lived in very populous settlements near the city called Talavera de Madrid or Esteco which had been founded on the bank of the Salado River 60 leagues away from the site at which, being reconstructed for the third time, it perished in the earthquake which occurred in 1692, the whole city being swallowed up by the earth. The city of Concepción has also been destroyed."

III

V
797 "The Jesuits Alonso Bárcena, Hernando or Fernando Monroz and Juan Viana took the Gospel, in 1589, to the Lules, the Isistinés, Toquistinés, and Oristinés, all of whom heard Saint Francisco Solano preach several times.

Tonocote SI 13
Vilela SI 14

IV

T 797 "The venerable missionaries, Father Pedro Añasco and the aforesaid Father Bárcena preached the Holy Gospel to the Toconotés and Bárcena, being sixty five years of age, compiled a grammar and a vocabulary of the Toconoté language."

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"The four nations already mentioned, which lived near the unfortunate city of Esteco, fled to the forests on the other side [586] of the Salado River and lived there, nothing further being known of them until 1710 when they voluntarily left the forests. Don Esteban Urizar, governor of Tucumán, charged the Jesuits with their care.

VI

V T 175 114 "The Matará nation and other nations of the Chaco understand the Lule language because they trade with the Lules."

Following are some observations regarding Machoni's account which have received the critical approbation of Abbot Camaño:

I. Because of an old, unfounded tradition, it was thought that in the interior of the Chaco, on the banks of the Pilcomayo River (territories as yet unexplored) there lived many tribes of the Toconoté nation, of which Father Lozano makes mention in his description of the Chaco, based on the letters of Father Gaspar Osorio, celebrated Chaco missionary, written about the year 1630. In these letters the Chaco is described, information is given about its inhabitants and mention is made of the Toconotés of the Pilcomayo, who fled from Tucumán when the Spaniards first arrived close to the year 1549. These letters go on to say that, according to the inhabitants of Guadalcazar, a city in the Chaco, there was definite news of the Tonocotés in whose search Father Osorio was preparing to go.

II. Father Machoni therefore thought that the Lules were the Toconotés and that these latter were to be identified with that nation which had taken refuge in the forests. Knowing—as was stated in the accounts of the Jesuit missions—that Fathers Monroz and Viana had converted the Lules, and that Fathers Bárcena and Añasco had converted

Tonocote SI 13
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V the Toconotés and merging this information with the old tradition re-
175 garding the running off of the Toconotés, he concluded that the
114 Toconotés of the Pilcomayo, about whom nothing is known even now, were the Toconotés converted by the Jesuits and by Saint Francisco Solano, who was also apostle to the Toconotés.

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[101] III. The Toconotés to whom Father Bárcena took the Gospel were the ancestors of the Matará Indians, or of the aforementioned Matarás. "Matará" is a Peruvian word used to denote a type of plant which in Spanish is often called "espadaña" and in Italian "galanga." This plant abounds in the territory occupied by the Matarás. These Indians used to speak the Toconoté language (the grammar [587] of which was compiled by Father Bárcena) as is clearly to be understood from a letter which the above mentioned Father Bárcena wrote from Matará to Father Juan de Atienza, Jesuit provincial of Perú, to whom he says the following: "In the Toconoté language and with the God-given diligence of Father Pedro de Añasco, I think that heaven is gladdened and that you, Father, would rejoice ... if you were yourself to see the fervor and care with which young and old come to hear the doctrine in their own tongues, etc." The settlement of Matará which boasted some 8,000 persons and was in the previously referred to city of Concepción was transferred to the jurisdiction of Santiago del Estero on the Salado River, latitude 28° and 30 leagues from Santiago. The cause of this transfer was the incursions of the Abipones, Mocobís, Tobas Mocosnos and Calcaquíes.

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[161] "The Indians called Mataras are the true Toconotés (numbering 60,000 in the jurisdiction of Concepción, as Machioni [sic] says), whom Saint Francisco Solano and the Jesuits evangelized. They used to be so numerous that the tribute paying Toconotés in the jurisdiction of Esteco (mentioned above) alone amounted to 30,000. There also were Toconotés in Concepción, in Santiago, and in San Miguel. In Esteco there must have been at least 100,000 Toconotés since, as has already been said, those paying tribute numbered 30,000, and the women and children did not pay tribute to the King. This once teeming nation is at present reduced to a small number of persons because of sickness and the hard labor imposed on them by the Spaniards who force them to work despite the express prohibition of doing so outlined in the Spanish laws for the Indies and the frequent and stern commands of the

Tonocote SI 13
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T 175 Catholic Monarchs. Every day and on every hand things happen in America which prove the dire need, as has been said before, of charging and entrusting the missionaries with the care of all missions if a just and useful service is to be performed both for religion and for the state.

"It is to be inferred then that the Matará nation was the Toconoté. Let us see now if the four Lule tribes or nations mentioned above, descend from the converted Lules, and whether they and the Toconotés had a common origin.

T V 191 "In his account of Paraguay, and speaking of Fathers Fernando Monroi [sic] and Juan Viana (already cited), Techo says in 1607 that the ancient Lules used to speak several tongues, such as [588] Quechua, Toconoté and Cacana. They must needs have spoken Quechua because they were subjects of the Incas, or of the Emperors of Perú, where Quechua was the universal tongue; they must also have spoken Toconoté because they had lived with the Toconotés; and Cacana was probably their mother tongue, a name which in the Quichua [sic] or Peruvian language means hill or mountain dweller and derives from the word "caca," mountain. The Cacana language of these Lules is quite unknown, but one gathers from Techo's account of it that it differed from the Toconoté. The words "toconot" and "toconoté" have no particular meaning in the Lule tongue and I am told that the Lules have never so much as heard that the Toconotés or, for that matter, the Matarás (who are the real Toconotés) were in any way related to them—and the Indians consider that all nations who speak their same language are related. A missionary to the Matarás has told me that he heard his Indians, on one or two occasions, speak a tongue unknown to him, and making inquiries about it he learned that it was an ancient language of the Matarás. But as this missionary only knows the Quechua tongue, which was his means of communicating with the Matarás, it still cannot be decided whether Matará and Toconoté are quite separate tongues or merely dialects of the same one.

V 175 "Neither can it be ascertained whether the Cacana language of the ancient Lules is the same as that spoken by the Lules at the present time—for these latter, as I have said before, probably are not descended from those Lules converted in times past, as Machoni affirms. The latter day Lules are peace-loving and the ancient were warlike.

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V 175 In the language of the modern Lules not one single word of Spanish origin is to be found and not the least sign of any religion has been [177] discovered among them. The modern Lules call themselves "pele" [101] (which means man) and the word "lule" has no meaning in their language. Finally, in the Jesuit accounts concerning the conversion of the ancient Lules, no mention is made of the Isistiné, Toquistiné and Oristiné tribes (mentioned above).

" Regarding the present day Lules I consider as certain and sure only the following information: The undefeated Don Esteban Urizar, who has been spoken of earlier, pursuing, in the year 1670, the warlike Abipona, Toba, etc. nations, came upon the Lules and finding them to be peaceable, invited them to receive certain missionaries. He gave over the Lule mission into the care of the Jesuits. [589] The Lules, however, after the founding of the mission and because of the raiding of certain heathen nations, wandered about from place to place in Spanish conquered territory until in 1752 they again settled in their erstwhile home of Miraflores called San Esteban.

"In this place there were 550 Lules. The Isistiné and Toquistiné tribes came out of the forests in 1751 and settled in Valbuena which is also called San Juan Bautista. In this settlement, in 1766, there were 740 persons of the two tribes. The Lules do not even recall the name V of Oristiné, although it is conjectured that it may have been the name T of the Lule tribe itself, a name long since lost in their wanderings."

174 "Five years after I had published, in Italian, the foregoing ob-114 servations on the Lules, Toconotés, etc., Mr. Jollis brought out for all to see his Historia del Chaco [History of the Chaco] in which, without referring to my work, he confirms the corrections I there set down. Jolis considers (1) the assertion made by Machoni and Lozano that there were 60,000 Toconotés on the banks of the Yabibiré River, between the Verde and Pilcomayo Rivers, as far fetched. He does not believe, furthermore, that the Churumata Indians lived in the foothills of the Andes mountains, 40 leagues from the Pilcomayo in a southerly direction and that they tilled the earth with the help of llamas (American

1. Jolis, ? : Historia del Chaco [History of the Chaco] Volume 6, Article 1 page 490-492; Article 7 page 450.

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T/V animals). He points out that llamas can only live in cold countries, 114 and the region supposedly inhabited by the Churumatas is hot. He says 174 also that Lozano deceives himself when he places in the catalogue of separate nations the Lules, Osistinés, Toquistinés, Oristinés, and Toconotés which are all tribes of one and the same nation. Finally he asserts that the missionaries Pedro de Añasco and Alfonso Bárcena, with signs and sermons in the Toconoté language, which was the tongue of the Matarás, and with their own good example, were able to convert them to the Christian faith. So much for the observations of Jolis. Regarding the Churumatas he does not furnish information sufficient to know their character and language. [590]

XIV

Some Observations on the Previous Chapter

What has been quoted in the last chapter has been somewhat lengthy, but only thus could one do justice to the arguments with which Hervás rejects the name of Tonocotés given by Machoni to his Lules.

The fact is that Father Machoni himself refrains from presenting any proof in support of his guess that his Tonocotés were Lules and the Lules his Tonocotés.

When I start to take up the question of the language I shall show that it is hardly possible that the Lule of Machoni is the Tonocoté of the missionaries. For the time being, however, if I am to stick close to historical proof, I must confess that in the light of what Jolis says together with the weighty opinions of Hervás, we cannot for one moment admit that the Tonocotés and Mataráes are Lules. Before being aware of what Jolis and Hervás had to say against Machoni's hypothesis, I had already begun to suspect that there was something shaky in what was there set forward regarding this matter.

Larsen, in his introduction to the edition of the Lule language (p. 24), says the following: "Father Machoni had worked for nine years in the Miraflores mission, during the tenure of Don Esteban Urizar de Arespocochega, and it follows that his word is more to be trusted than is that of later critics."

This argument would be more forceful had Father Machoni expressed himself categorically and had he not confessed that the only

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V T 114 174 thing left of the grammar compiled by Father Bárcena was the fact that it had once existed.

From Machoni's account one can surmise that his opinion regarding Tonocoté was a guess, an 'obiter dictum' lacking in substance and quite valueless if compared to the solid reasons set forth by Jolis and Hervás—the former as much a missionary as was Machoni, and a better ethnologist; the latter as much a Jesuit as the priest whom he criticizes, and a better filologist.

Father Machoni was only seeking the best means for the evangelizing of the Indians; Hervás was raising a linguistic monument. [591]

One thing seems to have escaped the notice of those who have studied the problem: Hervás calls the Tonocotés, Toconotés, doubtless with ample justification, but we should have been given some reason regarding the resultant metathesis of the words "co" and "no."

I shall return to this matter after I have cited the authors of the present day, since the testimony of these throws a little light on the subject and I want to avoid repetitions wherever possible.

T 101 Techo and Lozano cannot possibly have been mistaken when they wrote "Tonocotés," nor can Hervás have merely invented his transliteration "Toconotés." The whole thing can probably be resolved in the following manner:

$$\left.\begin{array}{l}\text{"To" —or}\\ \text{"Toco"}\end{array}\right\} + \begin{array}{l}\text{"nocotés" or "noctés" or}\\ \text{"notés"}\end{array}$$

that is, that the prefixes "to" and "toco" serve to determine the roots "nocotés" or "notés."

In this business of Indian names the first thing to be determined is, who first called the Indians by this name? The second is, what name do these Indians use when speaking about themselves? Take for instance the name Guaycuru, which is a nickname given by the Guaraní tribes to the bad Chaco Indians and which is not to be found in any vocabulary list; this is so because the term Guaycurú is a compound one, and a search for it in that form would be about as fruitful as looking up the word "malito" ["little bad one" -- "malo" plus the diminutive ending "ito", which would not be listed in any Spanish dictionary--Translator] in a Spanish dictionary. The root is "ai"—rogue—and with it and several known affixes the word Guaycurú is formed.

XV

The Mataguayos

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In the year 1884 the Reverend Father Alejandro María Covrado in collaboration with another missionary published in Florence certain Noticias Históricas [Historical Information] originating in the Franciscan College of Tarija and other missions, and in appendix L we find a very important account with reference to the Mataguayos which I shall quote: - page 535, etc. "The Mataguayos are spread over a vast region of the Chaco, especially the left bank of the Bermejo and the right bank of the Pilcomayo. On the Salta frontier they are commonly called Matacos, and Noctenes on the Tarija frontier, which is a corrupt form of Octenai, a name [592] given them by the Chiriguanos and which, in turn, appears to be a corruption of Huenneyei (1), which is what the Mataguayos call themselves. By way of epilogue we shall give an account of what was reported, regarding the ways and customs of these savage tribes, by a missionary of this college who lived amongst them for many years:

"In their features and coloring the Mataguayos, Matacos or Noctenes, which are one and the same people, are very little different from the Chiriguanos. Their customs however are very different, and their languages absolutely so. Their villages are small, consisting usually of the several branches of only one family. They do not like to construct them in open places, preferring the dense forests and reed beds. The dwelling places are small huts made of branches or cane stuck in the ground, bent over and gathered at the ends, and covered with straw. On the inside they are similar to ovens; they are less than two meters high and their size is proportionate to the number of people to be housed in them. The ground passes for their bed, and is either quite bare or else covered with a mat of rushes or the skin of some animal. Cleanliness is utterly lacking. When the place gets to be full of fleas or other insects or filth they burn their hovels and build others not far off.

1. Plural of the word which means men.
(J. Pelleschi)

415 323 "The best pieces of equipment of which they can boast are some small vessels of "palo santo" [lignum vital—a kind of wood--Translator] and a few small clay pots with very narrow mouths and two little handles which serve them as water flasks on their frequent raiding forays."

302 "Men and women alike shave their heads completely. They use, for that purpose, the sharp jaw of a certain fish, and their own teeth serve them to pare their nails. They cover themselves as best 291 they are able from their waists to their knees. The men, on gala 286 415 occasions, often wear a sort of sleeveless jacket and hang a kind of [276] bag from one shoulder in which they keep a crude wooden pipe, fire making equipment and other nicknacks. Both the bag and the coat are knitted, made from agave or chaguar fiber, and curiously marked. 302 They pull out their beards, eyelashes and eyebrows, and either to improve their looks or in order to appear more terrible in battle, they blacken their faces and chests with coal dust."

262 "Their favorite food is fish, and lacking this, all kinds of wild fruits or roots other than the poisonous ones. Their principal vegetable food, on which they can count for a quarter of each year and which they store to some small extent, is the fruit of the algarrobo, chañar and mistol. They also eat, and that without repugnance, lizards, locusts, crickets [593], mice, and even eggs after they have been abandoned, together with other filth. They eat fish and any other kind of meat [252] or roots, roasted or boiled, and know of no other way of preparing food. [261] They can withstand hunger admirably, and when they are unable to get other food they spend their time lying about chewing some herb or leaf from the forest."

273 579 "From the algarroba [pod which grows on the algarrobo tree--Translator] they make a beverage which is extremely delicious to their taste and which intoxicates them and makes them very fierce. Their drunken parties almost always end in a fierce fight which would have dire results were it not that the women, who never drink of that liquor, are careful to hide the arrows and all other offensive weapons and to hold back and separate those engaged in fighting."

533 222 "When the algarroba starts to turn yellow, they place in a central place among the huts, the pimpin, which is a log, concave at its upper end, covered with a piece of hide. A drummer with a belt about

533 222 his waist from which hang a number of shells, claws, little horns, teeth and similar trifles, beats on that rustic drum day and night without ceasing and, with the continous movement of his body, makes the trinkets about his waist rattle all this accompanied by a song or rather a lugubrious and high-pitched shouting which can be heard at a great distance. This ridiculous performance is not a simple demonstration of rejoining but rather, in their opinion, a rite necessary to hasten the ripening of the longed for and beneficent fruit."

222 262 "When a woman arrives from the forest laden with fruit, roots or other eatables, all the other women of the village crowd to her hut and she, after having set aside enough for the sustenance of her family, distributes the rest, the other women not saying a word of showing any sign of appreciation. [626] Were she to refrain from giving away her surplus, it would cause the greatest displeasure, and might even provoke some dangerous quarrel."

181 "The Mataguayos are timid and cowardly, but vengeful in the extreme. They never forget an offense—sooner or later they will [671] be avenged. The law of requital is unbreakable for them. They avoid making war when this is possible, but if they are attacked they [411] defend themselves. Their most common weapon is the arrow."

593 "They recognize no authority and no law. The child obeys its parents if it wishes to and the latter, though they may love their children, have no power at all over them. Nevertheless one does not generally encounter lack of respect toward the old or toward the unfortunate." [594]

462 "The men busy themselves with fishing and only very rarely indulge in hunting. [241] Their agricultural activities are limited to the sowing of a few clumps of pumpkins and watermelons. [283] With the juice of the latter they make aloja. Some of them also devote their time to making thin ropes of agave fiber with which they construct their nets."

"All other work is done by the women. She must not only prepare the food but also fetch fruit and roots from the forest; not only bring water but also chop firewood; not only look after the cleanliness of the hut but also make it. In one word: she is a slave."

881 "When a girl reaches nubility she is hidden in a corner of the hut and covered with fronds and rags. It is illicit for her to speak to anybody or taste meat or fish for a determined length of time. Meanwhile a drummer goes through the same ceremony in front of her

881 hovel as was performed for the ripening of the algarroba."

"Marriages have no special ritual of any importance. They
582 do not marry close consanguineous relatives but do so with in-laws.
Although they usually marry another member of their own nation, they are not forbidden to marry those of another, especially of the Toba nation. Parental authority has no say whatever in the childrens' marriages, and these latter marry as they wish to, when they wish to and whom they wish. The woman requires the groom to be a good fisherman and he that the bride not be too much of a homebody but be willing to wander about the countryside in search of food."

585 "The marriage being done in secret, the couple go off to the
591 forest for five or six days. On returning to the village they live openly
in the hut which they choose to occupy, although the normal thing is for the bride to go to live in the hut of her parents-in-law."

595 "Polygamy is very rare and it is most uncommon to come
586 across a man having two wives simultaneously. However they do not
recognize conjugal indisolubility and the younger persons quite frequently divorce each other. This is not so apt to happen among older men, although a whim is often enough to bring a divorce about.
[684] Adultery is considered a crime and is not very common. The wife of
the man involved will invariably avenge herself upon the adultress, going to her hut publicly, shouting at her wildly and disfiguring her by giving her a sound beating with a stick in the presence of the whole village which congregates to jeer.

843 "When pregnant the woman is not given the least considera-
846 tion. After bearing her child she lies on the sand for a few days
while her husband abstains from fishing and from all other activities." [595]

854 "The mothers are very loving in bringing up their children.
While they are little they seldom part from them, and amidst the burdensome domestic chores and daily foraging trips into the country-
[482] side they carry their babies about with them in a wide transverse
swathe. When the children are a little bigger they carry them on one
[553] or other of their shoulders. When they are two or three years old they
are given names."

"Abortion is very frequent, particularly among the unmarried
647 women, and it is brought on by their striking their abdomens or by
having some other person strike them. Infanticide is rare but it happens now and then that a very small suckling child is put to death so that, buried at its dead mother's side, it may receive milk from her."

756 "As in all the tribes of this America, there are among our Mataguayos certain doctors or wizards, whom they call "yegu." They are feared and respected. Those who wish to enter this profession go off into the uninhabited areas for a few days, fast rigorously and run about continuously day and night. Their manner of effecting a cure is to lean their whole bodies right over the sick person, who is lying on the ground, place both hands in the form of a tube over the affected and painful parts and then blow with all their might emitting at the same time a series of hoarse bellows. They persevere in this treatment for hours on end and even all night long. By way of payment they are given anything they ask for to the point that the invalid may be left naked, but if the sick person should not recover, his relatives will insist that everything be returned. When an epidemic of some sort appears in the village or in the surrounding villages, all the yegus come together, sit down a short distance away from the group of huts and with their faces turned toward them burst forth into a melancholy song accompanied by the sound of some small gourds filled with stones which they shake at the same time. They think that this will frighten the pestilence away or prevent its entering."

164 "A common malady among the Mataguayos is mange, and the
disease which ravages them most is pleurisy. As soon as they become
ill they shave their heads and call the yegu. When an invalid starts
763 to die he is taken to the place where he is to be buried and there, in
764 order to have him avoid the anguish of his last moments, he is choked
to death. The body, not extended but half raised, is placed in a
rather shallow hole which, after being covered with branches and grass,
has earth thrown on it."

768 "On returning from the funeral all the equipment which be-
longed to the deceased is broken up; his hut is dismantled and taken
to a new spot [596] or at the very least the door through which he
[764] passed on being carried out to his grave is covered over. Each village
has its own common burial ground which is always close at hand."

765 "The deceased's relatives gather around the grave on the night following the burial, and perform the funeral rites with lugubrious clamorings and drumming on their pimpines. For some time they abstain from eating fish and other meats.

774 "They have a vague notion of the soul which they call Neuseh of which they believe that it outlives the body and transmigrates into

M [774] 776 some animal according to its merits in this life. They also recognize with the name Ohott-at (1) (great spirit) a superior being who created

1. "O'hot" = spiritness; "tat" and "taj" = augmentative (J.P.)

them, but they do not worship this being at all. They are in great fear of an evil being who, wandering about at night, harms man, for which reason they call it Onnescilele (2) (night wanderer) and commit

2. "Onne" (hunat) = night; "sci" = locative; "léle" = patronimic (J.P.)

themselves to his service in order to win his good will."

XVI

Some Observations on the Previous Chapter

M 114 101 The notes on appendix L written by Father Alejandro M. Corrado are full of material of interest for this treatise. In them he establishes that "Matacos, Mataguayos and Noctenes are one and the same thing" explaining that in Salta they are called Matacos, and in Tarija Noctenes, while the Mataguayos themselves refer to themselves as Huenneyei.

According to the good Father the name Noctenes is a corruption of Octenai, a term used by the Chiriguayos to refer to these Indians. I find myself incompetent to argue this point about the origin of the name Noctenes; but since the Tobas and Guaycurúes owe it to the Guaraníes that they are known to us by their present names it would not be at all strange that a similar thing had happened in this case also.

T M 101 114 We are given to understand by this account that not everyone calls the Mataguayos Noctenes, and one can understand that this is the cause of the disappearance of the Tonocoté nation. Tonocoté was a name limited to certain tribes only, but which doubtless was extended to many others, as far as language goes, because it was the first learned

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by the missionaries and because it served them well in catechising all the members of the same language family.

Father Cardus writes Noctenes in such a way that the obtrusive "c" participates to a degree in the sound which the Mocovíes add to every [597] medial "t" (see "Mocoví Fonologia" [Mocoví Phonology]). Because of this variant we can see that the Mataco-Mataguayos could just as well be called Noctenes as Notenes.

From the sound of the name Tonocoté I would say that it is made up of Noctenes or Notenes plus the Chaquense and very Mataco prefix "to" which means "the." The final "n" is of Spanish influence and is merely indicative of nationality. A parallel to this is that we say Tobas when the actual root word is "obá"—face—because the Guaraní language attaches to all its nouns etc. a demonstrative prefix of relation which can be "t", "r", etc.

Hervas speaks of Toconotés, Techo and others of Tonocotés. To my way of seeing it the difference of opinion can be resolved in the following manner: "Noté" is the same as "Nocoté," and the prefixes "To" and "Toco" are also identical by way of the well known degeneration "Toco" "Toho" "To." I mention the latter because even though "Nocten" and "Noten" may agree exactly in that they refer to the same thing, the qualifying prefix need not necessarily be the same in both cases.

Until such time as some more reasonable explanation appears or some contrary one is put forward I claim that the terms Tonocoté, Toconoté, Nocten and Noten have identical lexical value.

Every student of the Guaraní and related Chaco languages must needs confess that "t" and "to" are never more than demonstrative prefixes. I do not deny that "Toco" may have a more concrete meaning, such as—Colorado, the Tenco River, etc. What matters is that recognition be given to the fact that the Noctenes or Notenes may be the To-nocotes of history. This would explain all the contradictions to be found in the writings of Machoni, Jolís and Hervas.

It is inconceivable that a nation as strong as the Tonocoté could have disappeared amidst so much else that has been preserved. It was the typical Mataco, Mataguayo, Matará etc. tribe which tradition says had exiled itself to the basin of the Pilcomayo—there we find Noctenes or Notenes, which are Matacos and Mataguayos. We are then in the position of having to confess that these Indians are, more or less, the Tonocotés of history, and that the name had been lost because it was a

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M nickname given them by neighboring nations who then stopped using
114 it. The name has cropped up again at the present time because the
101 missionaries have returned to those missions from the Chiriguano side and have adopted the name by which the latter usually referred to them.

Even if it were a matter of a name originating in the nation itself there would be some latitude in its transliteration, but the fact being that they are [598] nicknames invented by other Indians and heard and transcribed by the Spaniards allows of much greater freedom, and I do not believe that the hypothesis that the Noctenes of Father Corrado are the Tonocotés of Father Techo is so fantastic a one.

It may not be superfluous to note that the Indians whom we call Tobas call themselves by the name Tocouitt, which, compared to the other Mocouitt leaves as residue the word Toco which could be compared to the "Toco" or "To" of the Indians treated in this chapter. In the Toba and other allied languages the "C" is a false sound and the syncopation of syllables is the rule.

XVII

What Father Cardús Has to Say About the Matacos, Mataguayos, etc.

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114 The Reverend Franciscan Father José Cardús published in Barcelona in 1886 his work entitled "Las Misiones Franciscanas" [The Franciscan Missions] of Bolivia in connection with the College of San José de Tarata. In it we find the following information about the Matacos (pages 250 to 258) which I shall quote, thus opening myself up to criticism for over prolixity, yet I feel I am justified because the information is important and credible since the missionaries write with exactness of what they have seen and known at close quarters.

I have not seen the Matacos and do not know them, and I am wary of allowing myself to be carried away by preconceived notions. Yet I must of necessity quote and not comment upon my authors who will thus say what they wish to say and not what some other person wishes them to say.

It can be said that from the time of the Conquest such informa- 114 tion as we have about the Indians in their ramifications and languages we owe to the Missionary Fathers. Any attempt to write about these Indians whom the Spaniards found on our continent really has to take very specially into account the writings of these meritorious soldiers of Christ.

"The Matacos are also known by the names Mataguayos, 101 131 Notenes, Vejoses, Ocoles, Malbalas, Chunupis (1) and others, according to location. All of them with only slight differences speak the same language and their customs are practically identical. They occupy the western part of central and southern Chaco, principally both banks of the Bermejo River and the right bank of the Pilcomayo." [599]

"The number of these Indians is probably about 20,000. Some [161] of them already have dealings with the frontier Christians, among 184 whom they spend some time each year, working on their ranches; 648 while others live in complete isolation from the whites, whom they regard as their enemies, and not without reason, especially the Argentines who for some years now have been systematically ousting them from their lands, persecuting and exterminating them. It is probable then that within a few years the Matacos will have undergone great changes in their manner of living and will have diminished in number. Be that as it may the present day Matacos are still constituents of quite a large tribe which is different in some respects from the others.

[142] The Mataco is of middling stature, somewhat slim and of a dark coppery color; 181 apathetic in nature, reserved and wary, his glance reflects suspicion and treachery. His manners are boorish and his person and physiognomy vile and repulsive. He is a thief by instinct and he also steals because he considers it his duty. He is long-suffering and warlike, lazy and dirty in habit and innately cowardly and vengeful. The individual members of the neighboring tribes are characterized by a mental alertness which, though untutored is there for all to see. Not so the Matacos, who are mentally sluggish and to whom one cannot even attribute astuteness, in spite of their being sneak thieves. They are admired by all for the apparent lack of feeling with which they endure insults and also for the cold-bloodedness with which they will stab an enemy or allow themselves to be stabbed."

1. Not to be confused with the Chunupi-Vilelas.

"Their weapons comprise arrows, spear and club, and those
411 who cannot procure iron spears attach a sharp piece of deer antler to
221 the end of a pole. Their occupations are limited to a little hunting;
262 to fishing, to which end in some places they customarily make nets of
[227] *garabata* fiber; to gathering a few wild fruits, and to loafing. For
this reason their food consists of a little meat from the wild animals
they hunt, fish and fruits. These latter they gather abundantly during
some months of the year, although the variety is limited mainly to
the fruit of the *chañar*, *mistol*, and *algarrobo*. Fish is also plentiful
in certain seasons. Game, on the other hand, is relatively scarce
but they eat anything which is in any way similar to meat with relish,
such as small lizards, crickets, locusts and mice (1) so that although
they do get rather thin in certain months by reason of the scarceness
231 of food, no one dies of starvation. Some, but [600] very few, raise
sheep and other domestic animals. In any event, when times are
hard, and even when they are not so hard, the frontier Christians have
pretty large cattle herds, herds which often help the Matacos out when
food is scarce, and this with little effort. Most of them refrain from
241 agricultural pursuits because that would involve too much work (in the
Mataco opinion), except for some perfunctory sowing of pumpkins
which grow with astonishing ease in those parts and in such abundance
and such high quality that some frontier people, with a little exaggeration,
used to tell me that they were so delicious that it was a pleasure
to see and taste them and that their honey-like sweetness was such
that when one wished to cut one open the knife would become stuck
fast in them. I observed that while these people were telling me about
the pumpkins their mouths would begin to water, so much so that I
was almost persuaded to go off and live in those places where such
delicious and mellifluous pumpkins grew and multiplied so easily."

273 "From wild fruits and even from pumpkins and watermelons they
579 make a fermented beverage which they like very much but which intoxicates
them powerfully; and in their fury they join in some very
bloody frays. This is why the women abstain completely from drinking
that beverage and hide their husbands' weapons during those periods

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1. That is: cavies, which are very good to eat when fat (J.P.)

273 when the drink excites them too much and infuriates them. In this
579 way many wounds and deaths are avoided, yet in spite of it they are frequent."

273 "The fruit which they most commonly use to make their brews
221 is the algarrobo pod, which is quite sweet and nutritious and probably the most abundant fruit in those regions. When the season for this fruit is in the offing it would seem that new life, happiness and pleasure are born, and the Indians prepare for it by putting on a show to get everyone to make ready for the coming of the happy and much sighed for season."

222 "To this effect, when the pods of the algarrobo start to turn
533 yellow they place a wooden mortar in front of their dwellings, and
789 cover it with a half tanned sheep skin or the skin of some other animal. One of them, with a piece of cord or leather thong bound about his waist from which hang a number of shells, horns and small bones, and other things which will make a little noise, starts [601] to pound with a small stick on the mortar, which they call pimpin and which takes the place of a drum. This drummer accompanies the blows dealt to the pimpin with divers body movements, half dancing but rooted to the spot, in such a manner that the objects which hang from his waist make a tambourine-like sound, something like the rattling of empty nutshells; singing meanwhile out loud but in a sad monotonous way—one would say that they fear some great calamity or are asking for help in a grim battle. The fact of the matter is that day and night, without ceasing, the low hollow sounds of the pimpin must be made, together with the rattling of the wild tambourine and the shouts or lamentations of the sorrowful singer—and all this they say is to bring about the quicker and better ripening of the desired fruit. That is why, when the singer-musician tires, another immediately replaces him.

342 "The houses of the Matacos are altogether too small and uncomfortable, but they make them so on purpose for they are thus able to husband time and fatigue, preferring ease in building to living comfort. They cut a couple of saplings or thin branches, bend them and stick the ends into the ground in the form of two crossed arches, tie a few handsful of straw to them and the house is finished. The entrance is low and narrow and one must enter on all fours. The appearance of the hut is that of an oven two or three yards in diameter. If the cutting of a few boughs looms difficult to them, then they cut several canes,

342 stick them into the earth in a sloppy circle, tie the ends together with any old thing, place a little straw on top and there they have a house with the appearance of an upturned funnel. And in there do 342 these privileged beings live, with more peace and tranquility than 513 kings in their sumptuous palaces; there do they build their fires and eat; there do the men and women sleep, with their parents, grandparents, children and grandchildren, and always in the company of a few dogs, on the bare ground or on a piece of reed matting, or on the skin of some wild pig they have killed, or cow they have stolen, all together in a jumble—this one with his head on his neighbor's chest, that one with his legs on some other's chest and the dogs on top of anyone who strikes them as comfortable. In this way their miserable 361 hovels soon swarm with insects and then they set fire to them and build others somewhere else—so they are forever moving into [602] new houses because those they construct are only makeshift. Furthermore they tend not to live in the same hut for long because of their habits of spending seasons now in one place now in another, according to the weather and time of year as for example: during the season of good fishing they spend weeks and months shifting continually from one section of the river to another, from the river to some stream, from the stream to some lake; in the fruit season they do the same thing."

"And so, as they are little inclined to bathing and always go 515 164 about dirty, and sleep piled up on each other together with their dogs, they are almost always full of mange, a disease which even kills many infants. Many of them, if it should fall that they take a bath, take pleasure, while still wet, in rolling about on the river sand or in the ashes which are in their huts, as do certain animals which seem to require filth. On certain days and in certain seasons they blacken 302 their chests and faces with charcoal in order to appear more handsome or to show that they are celebrating some occasion."

"All of them cut their hair with a knife or with the teeth of fish, this for lack of scissors, which implement would have only a [304] limited utility among them anyway. They also customarily pierce their ears, in order to insert a piece of stick or something as a fine ornament. The men pluck out with their nails the few hairs which grow on their faces, and some also pull out their eyelashes and eyebrows."

291 "Both men and women dress very simply, that is, they tie to their waists a piece of any old thing, such as a piece of hide or cloth

291 or netting, which reaches down to their knees or a little less. Some
men of more sophisticated taste sometimes put on a sort of waistcoat,
hand woven from garavata fiber and painted. Of the same material
[415] and made in the same way is the bag which they are in the habit of
carrying at their side, in which, when they travel, they keep their
flint and steel or the fiber and wax for their arrows and other small
things which they use. When at home, at least at nighttime, they
wear no clothes—possibly to keep from damaging them."

622 "There is no use looking for chiefs or captains with any
621 authority, for among them there are neither any who give orders nor
any who obey them—they only have friendly respect for, and some-
times follow the advice of, someone among them who enjoys a cer-
tain prestige or who is very likeable. In time of war or common
danger, some make limited alliances between a few huts only, for
sake of unity." [602]

"They marry without any visible ceremony and without
582 formalities of any sort; nor do the parents play a role in the matri-
mony of their children, who marry when they wish to and to whom
they wish—the women always give preference to a man who is adept
at fishing, and the men seek out those women who are active and
diligent in their search for fruit. Once a man and a woman have come
585 to an understanding they go off together into the forests for a few days,
591 doing whatever they see fit to do, and return then to the encampment
where they either set up for themselves or go to live with the woman's
595 parents-in-law. Few indeed are those who have more than one wife,
even though divorce, among the younger set, is frequent. Adultery
837 also appears to be rare; the women do not consent to others having
684 affairs with their husbands, on the contrary, they go to their houses
and insult, threaten and fight them, a thing which often proves highly
amusing to the men, women and children of the same camp, all of
whom come out of their abodes to see the gestures and grimaces which
the two women perform for each other's benefit, laughing uproariously
and applauding noisily and gleefully the name calling and cursing,
blows and kicks which they meet out to each other rather disgracefully.

774 "It would be useless to look for religious beliefs amongst a peo-
ple so miserable, not to say stupid. It seems, nevertheless, that they
do have some idea of the soul, which they call neusec, but about whose
776 ultimate destiny they have no clear idea. They also have a jumbled

776 idea of a large and supreme being, which in their language they call ohott-at (others pronounce it hojot-taj) which means 'great spirit,' but they do not worship it. Some of them appear to fear a sort of ghost which goes about at night and harms people and which they call onnexilele; others seem to indulge in a certain superstitious worship of a mysterious being which they call taj-juat, which means 'hidden one,' but without temple or particular place or determined time to render it their adoration. I only know that at the time of the new
791 moon, some of the Indians commonly get together to sing and dance,
776 and the sorcerers, as they call them, trick them by getting someone to dress up and play the part of taj-juat who, appearing out of the forest strangely garbed and speaking in a feigned tone of voice, frightens the spectators, to whom he predicts future times and events."

881 "But if the Matacos can be said to have no religion, this does not mean that they have no superstitious beliefs. For example, when a girl reaches puberty, she must remain withdrawn for a [604] certain time in a corner of her hut, covered with branches or any other thing, and neither speak to anyone nor eat meat or fish. And while she is thus withdrawn and cut off from the others, one of the village's ceremony masters must be in front of the hut playing the pimpin. When a
846 woman gives birth to a child she must remain lying down for a few days, and the husband must refrain from doing any work or indulging in any occupation for a long time. On occasion a woman has been surprised dancing round a bonfire into which she had thrown her dead child."

756 "Sorcerers also are not lacking among them, these, of course, being the most cunning, and the most feared and respected members of the community, who also play the part of medicasters and priests. In order to be accepted as one of those who follow so important and useful a profession it is enough if one wants to and feels strongly inspired; but first it is necessary that the candidate separate himself for a few days from the rest of the people and go off into the forest, fasting rigorously and going about day and night like a madman in no particular direction, returning then and appearing before the others pale, dirty, emaciated and with frightened eyes like one possessed. From that time on he is recognized as a privileged being who has had secret dealings with "the hidden one" and is possessed of a supernatural power which
[753] enables him to undo any evil bewitchment and eliminate diseases from the sick, it being axiomatic amongst them that nobody sickens or dies from purely natural causes.

756 or dies from purely natural causes. So when a person becomes sick or has any pain, the sorcerer is immediately called to take away the pain or to restore health. And let no one think that the sorcerer (witchdoctor) must feel the pulse of the sick person or make him stick out his tongue or confuse him and his relatives with the many questions with which our doctors confuse us—no, this would seem to them to be an admission of ignorance and furthermore, highly impertinent; nor do they cudgel their brains to find the cause of the infirmity or care whether there be herbs or special remedies to combat it—not at all, for it would only be a waste of time. Their method of effecting a cure is more simple. The patient having said that he feels pain in such and such a place, the witchdoctor does nothing other than to place his hands on the affected part, but he places them together and half-closed, in such a way that they are in the shape of a hollow vessel, exactly as when boys, with half-closed hands wish to imitate the sound of a trumpet or horn. And with their hands in that way, they begin to blow through [605] them with all the lung power at their command, accompanying the puffing with groans and howls, and persevering in this for hours on end, repeating the ceremony with greater or less frequency according to the state of the invalid and the possibility of payment for their work. Those who have nothing must yet give something to the witchdoctor, and those who have possessions must determine to give all of them to him, and they do so. Some however appear to doubt or at least to mistrust the witchdoctor's ability, for although they will give him all he asks for beforehand, they force him to return everything if his treatment is not efficacious. The one who is most fortunate in the recovery of his patients is the one who acquires most prestige, and he makes a good living. If the patient gets worse, and the witchdoctors see that he is going to die they usually declare him beyond recovery and abandon him in order not to lose prestige, and make excuse as to the incurability of the disease by claiming that some more powerful evil power is acting against him. [763]Often, if the witchdoctor who states that the patient is past hope is of some fame, the relatives of the patient will take the sick man out to the burial grounds while he is still alive, will dig his grave, choke him to death and bury him. When, on the other hand, one of their leaders 756 or some person of great influence or having many relatives or who is 554 generally well liked becomes seriously ill or is close to death, then there is usually a consultation or general gathering of all the

756 554 witchdoctors of the vicinity, who never declare the man beyond recovery but bend their every effort in making a great show of their ridiculous and childish practices in order to make death keep away. Gathered, then, in the invalid's hut, they stand about him at some little distance in a semicircle and do not take their eyes off him but observe his every movement with care. They begin to blow and gesture with their hands, now forcefully and with verve, now slowly and softly according as they see that the patient seems more fatigued or gets back some of his strength; and all this in order to pretend that they see death approaching and are trying to chase it away. In the [533] same manner they begin to sing in base, funereal tones an air similar to a continuous harsh howling, and, being guided by the condition of the invalid they modify their expressions, gestures and tone of voice. The stricken person for his part always tries, by means of his fatigue, his cries or moans, his frightened eyes and perturbed expression to let the others know what he is feeling and the state he considers himself to be in; and the witchdoctors, following these obvious signs, gesticulate more or less, blow and howl with greater or less softness [606] or loudness, come close and hurl themselves wildly towards the invalid or gently fall back a short distance. When it seems that the sick man is about to die they come at a bound so close to him, heightening their gestures to such a pitch and howling so unceasingly and in such broken, forced and hoarse tones, with eyes so wide open and fearful and with so many expressions of terror, that anyone could easily be led to believe that they do in fact see death in the guise of some deformed and terrible figure and that they wish to frighten it, make it flee or seize it. All this is done so seriously and naturally that no one would suspect them of perpetrating a hoax or deceiving; but the fact is that even if the invalid were still able to live for a while, terror would soon finish him off."

"The witchdoctors are also believed to have the power to drive away and make disappear plagues and calamities such as smallpox, which wreaks havoc among them; the lack of water or its excess and other things. To this end the witchdoctors meet, go off a little way from the camp and, seated upon the ground, like so many Jeremiahs, begin to sing their lamentations, without words of course, accompanying [534] the sad song with the choc-que-choc produced by the coming together of small stones placed in a hollow gourd which they hold in their hands and rattle to beat time."

000 of small stones contained in a hollow gourd which they hold in their
hands and rattle to beat time."

"They bury their dead very close to the surface, being satis-
764 fied to dig a shallow pit into which they place the corpse half sitting
up, with a few small branches beneath and on top of him and a little
earth. Because of this it often comes about that jaguars, who can
easily dig up these careless graves, get a taste for human flesh and
become man-eaters. Sometimes the Indians put a little pot of water
in the grave for the deceased's benefit. They also commonly burn
a few things which he had used, and also his hut. The relatives of
the deceased have to go to his burial place and lament over it, ac-
companying their cries with the pimpin. These wailings, according
to the locality, are repeated for some days. They have also other
[177] customs which they have picked up from the Tobas, to whom they are
related and with whom they are friendly."

"It can be seen, then, that the Mataco tribe is at present a very
181 miserable one. Their way of living and their customs, furthermore,
648 and the circumstances of our times together with the region in which
they live do not point to a particularly happy future. It certainly can-
not be said that the Matacos who live in Bolivian territory are de-
clared enemies of the [607] whites or Christians, rather is it true
that they sometimes work for them and say that they are friends of the
whites and wish to be treated as such, in spite of the fact that this
friendship seems feigned, a cloak under which they can the better
steal and conceal themselves. They rustle the Christians' cattle which
they exchange with the Tobas for horses, and these in turn they trade
off to the Christians for other things they need, saying that they have
captured these animals from their enemies."

"Across from the Mission of San Francisco de Pilcomayo and
181 on the banks of the river (the Pilcomayo River--Translator) are the
797 ruins of the Mission of San Antonio, made up of Matacos brought to-
gether in 1863 and which, after having been in Bella Esperanza for two
or three years were transferred to this place, where they stayed, in
quite sizeable numbers, until 1879, in which year they escaped, al-
though groups of them had fled and returned more than once before.
While they remained at the Mission little or nothing could be accom-
plished with them in any way—they would not even consent to allowing
their little children to be baptized when at the point of death. The

181 final pretext which they gave for escaping was that their white neighbours wanted to kill them, and it seems that this was actually the
197 case; and the Matacos had good reason to fear some reprisal for they continued to have an understanding with the Tobas in whose company they indulged in periodic stealing. They wished, or at least some of them did, to return a short while later, but the Missionary Fathers did not dare to readmit them as they could clearly see that at that time they could not hope to accomplish anything with such a depraved, shiftless and untrustworthy people, and also because they deemed it prudent to quell the slanderous murmurings of the whites who kept saying that the missionaries were informers for the Indians and aided them in their raids."

"And nevertheless it is a fact that the Tobas and also the Matacos stole a hundred times less when they were with the missionaries than before they came to them and after they left. I merely refer to these matters in order to point out the difficulties, which still exist, of converting and civilizing the Matacos; it may be that later on the circumstances will change, and the difficulties will disappear or lessen." [608]

XVIII

Observations on the Preceding Chapter

According to Father Cardús the Matacos are the Mataguayos Notenes [sic], Vejoses, Ocoles, Malbalaes, Chunupies, etc. One must not confuse these Chunupies with the Chulupies or Vilelas.

Here we see how the Noctenes can also be Notenes; and it would be interesting to find out what the dialect of the Malbalaes and Chunupies is like.

I have not thought it to be my business to abridge the reports of the Missionary Fathers because they are full of interesting facts and I am always wary of the personal element when the subject being treated is that of Indian nations around which there plays a certain discord among authors. Were I able to add anything, regarding these Indians, from personal observation, that would be another matter; but my field is limited to languages and I really needed trustworthy background material such as this in order to set the stage for what will later be said regarding the Mataco language and its co-dialects.

114 It is strange that in the last two reports so much importance has been given to the Noctén tribes about which nothing is said by authors writing in colonial times. This in itself already tends to favor the hypothesis that the Noctenes may be the Tonocotés.

In this part of the continent it does not seem that there occurred that veritable extermination of whole tribes, such as was the case with the Charruas in Uruguay and we must therefore search about somewhere for the 60,000 and more Indians who understood or spoke the Tonocoté language. Among them were the Mataguayos, who exist down to the present day; it would be only natural, then, to affirm that Mataguayo is a dialect of Tonocoté, and since Noctén and Mataguayo are closely related dialects, it follows that Noctén is as much a dialect of Tonocoté as is Mataguayo.

In the following chapter I shall set forth a report which was sent to me by Father Eliseo Molina of the Franciscan College at Tarija. [609]

XIX

What Father Doroteo Giannecchini has to Say Regarding the Noctenes and Other Mataco Tribes

101 "The Noctenes, Matacos, Vejoses, Guiznaes, and Chulupies belong to one single nation, for all speak the same language and have the same customs."

184 "Such nations are differentiated by their name and by traits which I shall call provincial or local."

"Our Noctenes, for example, who are the ones who inhabit the
101 country between the foot of the Pisapo mountain range and Pikírenda, 50
131 or 60 leagues to the east, are called Noctenes. In the vicinity of Pikírenda they take the name of Guiznaes; but they are of the same family as our Noctenes and are even related to them by blood."

"From Pikírenda onwards, some 30 leagues, more or less, and up to the Paraguay River they take the name of Chulupies; and along the whole right bank of the Pilcomayo River, from our first Noctén mission on to the Paraguay River, it is the same tribe: their

101 131 speech and customs are somewhat different, but in substance it is the same language, and they understand each other perfectly when each speaks in his own way."

"Across from the Colonia Crevaux, on the left bank towards the north there is another tribe called Chorotis which must originally have been a group captured by the Noctenes for their language is a true Mataco or Noctén dialect and many words are identical with Noctén words."

"It is true that these Chorotis live as unto themselves forming a separate tribe, but they are related to and have continual dealings with the Noctenes. Their pronunciation is, however, much clearer and more intelligible than that of the Noctenes."

"These same Noctenes are related to the Matacos of Oran and the Chaco, in which place the Noctenes are called Matacos, and the Matacos living between the left bank of the Oran River and the reservation in which we had a mission at the beginning of this century, take the name of Vejoses, and have their own local way of speaking the same language as the Noctenes and Matacos. Higher up, that is in our Bolivian Itiyuro, they again take the name of Matacos." [610]

"The fact is then that they do not have what might be called [197] a separate language—rather do they vary the pronunciation of certain terms which does not constitute a separate language but a local variation, as happens with the Spanish of Bolivians, Argentines, Chilians, etc., and between town and town, region and region."

This description was sent to me when I asked for a Pater-noster in Mataguayo, having already received one in Nocten.

All that has been transcribed in the previous chapters shows that 114 in the opinion of the missionary fathers the typical tribe was the Nocten, and that this is the name they use where we would say Matacos and Mataguayos. It is to be understood, then, that Nocten is nothing but a corruption of the name Tonocoté or Toconoté, already mentioned.

XX

Geographic Distribution of Mataco-type Nations

101 131 From all that has been told us by the Fathers of the Company and of the Franciscan Missions it can be deduced that the Mataco tribes occupy a diagonal region which in times past extended from the basin

101 131 of the Salado (1) River to the Pilcomayo, hemmed in towards the mountains by tribes of Quichua influence and others, and in the direction of the Río de la Plata by nations of the Toba-Guaycurú type. This vast region was bounded on the north by Chiriguano territory, and on the south by the Quichuas and Pampas of the Guaycurú-Querandí type.

174 It appears at present that the basin of the Salado River ceased to be territory of the nomad Matacos who, in the past century, were replaced by the Mocovíes and other tribes of a more definite Guycurú type. Lozano in his first volume and on page 175 (Lamas Ed.) says that "gasta" means town in the Tonocoté language. This being the case these tribes must have entered the valleys of Yocavil and Londres also, for all the Andean region is full of places whose names end in "gasta" (2). According to my observations "gasta" is as Cacan a word as is "ao."

In any case one thing must needs be conceded and that is that the Mataco tribes had shifted towards the southwest up to the Aconquija range. [611]

221 The Matacos, like the Tobas and other Guaycurú nations are and were nomads, and of course one cannot indicate exactly the areas frequented by them when they were on the move; at one time they would go in one direction, at another in another, according to pressure from more warlike tribes or from the Spaniards.

221 174 All agree that after the Spanish conquest numerous tribes of Matacos or Tonocotés withdrew towards the Pilcomayo River basin and this is exactly what would have been expected because there they were less exposed to Spanish raiders who would carry off any Indian they found to forced labor; these they used to call *piezas* "pieces of ordinance"--Translator].

1. From Matará northwards.

2. In none of the Mataco-Mataguayo dialects does the term "gasta" appear.

XXI

Ethnology of the Mataco-Tonocoté Nation or People

M 101 If it is difficult to fix the point or home territory of the Matacos, it is no less difficult to determine their ethnic origin. We lack the first requirement which is the craniology of these Indians: without that information we shall not be able to advance far, but we can at least go a little way by means of the language.

C 197 Basing my assertions on what will later be said regarding the language, I find that in the Chaco, as in the rest of America, the languages can be grouped grammatically into two large families. The one suffixes its pronominal particles, the other prefixes them. The former is represented by the nations which are Guaraní-like, and I therefore call it Atlantic, while the latter is made up of Quichua-like nations, for which reason I call it Andean or Pacific.

M 197 Holding to this classification, the Matacos as pure prefixers of the majority of pronominal particles, can be neither Lules, nor Vilelas, nor Quichuas, nor Aucasni, nor Aymaraes, since all these languages suffix these particles.

In spite of everything there exist among the Matacos and Lules certain lexical analogies which lead one to suspect some mixture, which would then certainly explain that greater placidity which is characteristic of both nations in the midst of the ferocious Guaycurues of the other parts of the Chaco. [612]

These analogies between Lules and Matacos are only of single words, but the pronouns and their particles are separated, "toto orbe." The same does not occur between the Mataco and the Quichua or Aymará: the first and second person primitive pronouns are somewhat more than merely similar, and this is reason enough to recognize that there was some original contact between the two peoples, though it is true that the Matacos are more backward.

To say that any given grouping of American Indians is of mixed origin is to come close to the truth, for in all probability not one is to be found which is not. In the present instance and judging from the point of view of linguistics, I tend to believe that the Mataco has in it some Lule and some Quichua.

This is not enough. In the reports which preface this study we have seen that the Matacos and Guaycurú-Tobas always go about together, 197 and we are assured that they differed more in language than in their manner and customs, that is to say, that they had in them a good bit of Toba, Mocoví and Abipón. This, linguistically speaking is a fact, for those differences to which the missionaries made reference are lexical rather than grammatical in character. Pronouns, their particles, suffixes of plurality, all point to a common origin, that is, to hybridization.

It is common knowledge that the Matacos and Tobas always went about together, as though they recognized their kinship.

[174] These considerations induce me to believe that the Matacos are the offspring of Guaycurú fathers and Lule mothers; and the Tobas, a mixture of Guaycurúes and Matacos.

The Guaycurúes are related linguistically to the Guaraníes, and these, in turn, to the Caribes and Mojo-Maypures, and they may also be related to the Matacos.

That Mataco has some Guaraní and Chaquense (Guaycurú, Toba, Mocoví, etc. tribes) is to be gathered since all of them prefix their pronominal particles; but the strange thing is that Quichua also has a place here, it being of all the most prone to suffixing.

174 All these linguistic anomalies can be explained if we admit what Montecinos says, that approximately since 500 B.C. to about 500 A.D. there were successive massive invasions of Perú from Brasil and Tucumán.

Observation teaches us that first and second person singular
197 pronouns and first (excluding the hearer) [613] person plural, correspond
174 to the predominant group, be it by conquest or for some other reason.
It is precisely in these persons that the analogy between Quichua and Mataco are most exact, it being only proper to give warning that Mataco, like Mojo, is logical even in its possessive particles, a phenomenon which does not occur in Quichua. (1)

1. Because "Ñokha" is--"I"; "y" subfixed--"my" or "mine," in Quichua.

Aymará and Araucano register the same pronominal influence and such analogies lead us to seek craniological proof, and also to study Mataco along with Quichua Aymará and Araucano.

174 Let us suppose that the Chaco, or rather the highlands which surround it, had been occupied by tribes corresponding to those we call Lules

174 and Quichuas, a peaceful people, docile and given to civilization, shall we say Diaguitas or Pueblo people. With the passage of time these would be attacked by nomadic tribes, Juries, a more or less Guaycurú type:- these latter would overrun the territory, killing and laying waste, taking possession of the land and of the women and children of the defeated.

From interbreeding with the Lules, to judge from the language, the Vilela and other similar nations could have sprung; and from contact with the Andean group, the Mataco nation and its ramifications.

Other hordes would sweep into the land at a later date, of a more pronounced Guaycurú type and by extermination on one hand and interbreeding on the other, there would spring up the Mocoví, Abipon, and the Toba, which latter, as I believe is a cross between Mataco and Mocoví, that is, Guaicuru [sic].

The Lengua, Payaguá and remaining tribes of the Guaycurú type still remain to be studied, but the preceding observations seem to explain, up to a point, the genesis of the Chaco Indians.

An interesting link is still missing, and that is the Charrúa. The most ferocious and indomitable of all the Indians ever encountered in Argentina, who did not give in even to the efforts of the Fathers of the Company of Jesus. A people given to swallowing up others, and later itself cornered in Uruguay, it disappeared from its theater of operations leaving only the meagerest traces of its existence. Yet the time was when it used to sweep the basins of the Paraná, Uruguay and Río de la Plata. When the Spaniards arrived, and for two centuries more they were the scourge of Santa Fé, Entre Ríos and Montevideo. Because their [614] language was guttural and very difficult, I claim them as being of the original Guaycurú type, that Chaco grouping which was an offshoot from Carib stock, at its most savage.

It is logical to attribute to the most warlike tribes a share in the heritage of the ferocious Mocovíes, Tobas, etc., and to suppose that the purer the blood, the less will be the disposition to take on the Quichua or European civilization.

Today it is the task of anthropology to resolve this problem. In the place where the Lules were snuffed out in the past century there must be considerable skeletal remains. The same must be the case with the Charrúa burial grounds in Uruguay. We still have the Matacos, Tobas, Mocovies, etc., with us. Let us hope then that men competent

174 in these matters will give serious study to these skulls and in that way confirm my hypothesis based on what the languages themselves allow us to glimpse.

114 The ethnology of a given people, if it is to be of value, must include the anthropology of that people. The language alone is insufficient because of the well known tendency to adopt foreign elements on both a large and a small scale.

I am sorry that I do not know as much as does Quatrefages; but if a man as eminent as he is has had to confess his ignorance in linguistic matters, much more so may I leave the question open until such time as the anthropological problems which Argentina poses to the authorities in that field, have been solved. I am satisfied to point out the paths which I believe I have found and to declare that judging by extant languages, everything in the Chaco is a mixed bag.

Further than this I do not dare to push my hypothesis. Let this quote from Quatrefages found in his "Hommes Fossiles et Hommes Sauvages" [Fossil Men and Savage Men] serve me as an excuse: "Furthermore in problems of this kind the physical characteristics are in every way more conclusive as evidence than all others. A nation can change in language, in customs, in industries, sometimes in a relatively short period; but height, skin, cranial shape—that cannot be lost so quickly" (p. 577). [615]

XXII

The Language of the Matacos

One of the mysteries of modern linguistics is the lack of information on this interesting group of languages, spoken by tribes which still occupy a considerable territory in the Argentine and Bolivian Chacos.

Little enough was known about the Mocoví, Abipon, and Lule, but that little was enough to reveal the grammatical workings of the respective languages. Yet about Mataco neither Hervas nor Adelung

114 can tell us more than that it existed.

It is hard to understand how the Mataco texts of Jesuit Mission times could have disappeared so completely, a thing lamented over by Machoni more than half a century before the suppression of the order.

I cannot believe that there does not exist, somewhere, a written record of some sort regarding it, and I do not despair of being able to run it down; but for the time being I must limit myself to the works of Father Romedí (of the Seraphic Order), to the notes which were presented to me by the Franciscan College of Tarija and finally and in the place of honor as it were, the field notes of engineer Juan Pelleschi. (1)

In the chapters which treat the subject of the history of the Tonocotés it seems to be proved that the Tonocotés, Mataguayos, Matacos, and the Mocovi-type Guaycurú tribes, were groupings of one single race, which spoke different dialects but which had a great deal in common.

197 We know now that the Noctenes, Mataguayos, and Matacos are tribes of the same family and speak dialects which are as similar to each other as are Portuguese and Spanish. These dialects, by their grammatical construction can in no way be confused with the Lule of Machoni, since the former prefix their pronominal particles while the latter suffix them.

114 Hervas and Jolis (2) have disproved Machoni's theory that [616] the Tonocotés who spoke Lule had taken refuge in the Pilcomayo River basin. Neither at that time nor at the present has any tribe been discovered to correspond to Machoni's Lules in that area, but there do exist there many of the Nocten, Mataco and Mataguayo type whom I suppose to be the real Tonocotés or Toconotés.

1. When I wrote this the Vejoz manuscript had not come into my hands.

2. In Italian, as in Latin, "J" sounds like "Y."

1: Pelleschi--61 C-5 (ca. 1875) 1896 SI7 Mataco SI7

193 From the most cursory examination of the Mataco or Mataguayo, or Nocten tongue it is evident that it is a language which prefixes its pronominal particles, while the Lule has just as strong a bent towards suffixing them.

197 [114] This fact alone is sufficient to separate Mataco from Lule with a barrier which is not to be bridged by Father Machoni's brief and indirect reference. This does not mean that I deny that Mataco and Lule may share common words—these analogies will be noted later—but the grammatical mechanism and the pronouns themselves point in absolutely opposite directions.

Following the classification which we have been setting down in this study, Mataco corresponds to the Atlantic type insofar as the position of affixes is concerned, although it is my impression that it leans more closely towards the Moja branch than towards the Guaraní, in spite of the greater immediacy of the latter.

114 197 Before proceeding further let us examine the arguments on which Machoni rests his hypothesis that the Tonocoté of Techo and others is really Lule:

In the first place the Lule language is not widespread but limited to the five nations: Lule, Isistiné, Toquistiné, Oristiné (1) and Tonocoté. The Tonocotés numbered 60,000 souls. (Machoni's prologue.)

Secondly, the Tonocotés in the XVII century lived near Concepción del Bermejo and were evangelized by Fathers Bárcena and Añasco. These Indians taking offense at the Spaniards, went off to the banks of the Yabebirí and Pilcomayo Rivers. Ibid.

Thirdly the Lules, Isistinés, Toquistines and Oristinés were evangelized by Fathers Bárcena, Monroy and Viana in 1589 and visited by Saint Francisco Solano. Ibid.

In the fourth place the Isistinés, Toquistinés and Oristinés fled to the Chaco and there remained for over a hundred years until in 1710 they came before don Esteban de Urizar y Arespacochaga who placed them in the Valbuena and Miraflores reservations; Father Machoni was with them for 9 years. [617]

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1. The Missionaries of whom Hervas made enquiries deny that there be Oristinés.

114 197 In the fifth place, Bárcena compiled a grammar and vocabulary of the language of these Indians when he evangelized the Tonocotés and Lules. Machoni confesses that nothing remains of this grammar other than the mention of its existence which appears in the missionary's biography. Ibid.

Conclusión: Ergo this Lule tongue is Tonocoté, common to the aforementioned five nations, and used by the Matará nation and many others of the Chaco for the sole reason that they are neighbors of the Tonocotés and Lules and trade with them.

Regarding all this series of non sequiturs Fathers Yolis [sic] and Hervás have given full account. Machoni confesses that nothing remained of Tonocoté other than the unconnected bits of information which he reports, which certainly have no philological interest whatever.

The Lules of Machoni may or may not be those referred to by Father Techo, but with regard to the Tonocotés Machoni has not given the least proof that they are the Lules; and it goes without saying that the language which he called Lule cannot possibly be stretched to include the Tonocotés.

Even as regards the work of the missionaries this identification of Lules and Tonocotés was unfortunate, for in that region of the Pilcomayo live the Noctenes, Matacos, Mataguayos and Tobas, for whom the Lule tongue is hardly the one to be recommended as common currency.

Had Hervás known about the prefixing character of the Mataguayo and Nocten etc. languages, he would have been even harsher in his criticism of the Lules-Tonocotés of Father Machioni [sic].

Being, as he certainly was, a good philologist he would have known that in a hundred years a suffixing language could hardly change over into being a prefixing one. This violent change is not to be found in any of the other Chaco languages. The Toba of today is the same as the Toba of Bárcena's time, and so also are the other languages.

It must be conceded then that the Lule of Machoni was not and
197 could never possibly be the Tonocoté of the early missions.

Since we know that the Mataguayos spoke Tonocoté in the period about which we are writing, and that at the present time Noctenes, Mataguayos, Matacos and many other tribes speak dialects of Mataco,

until the contrary is proved we must suppose that Mataco is Tonocoté.
197 A language as strongly rooted as this one could not possibly have become lost in the Chaco.

The Mataco language is one of the most widely used languages and is spoken by the largest grouping [618] of Indians in the Argentine and Bolivian Chacos, and yet we do not find it mentioned in any writings. One can therefore only deduce that the language of the Matacos is Tonocoté; this being the only rational hypothesis which for the present fits the case.

As far as languages go we can state that what the Mojos are to the Chiquitos, the Matacos are to the Chaco tribes of the Toba-Mocoví type, and just as the former have their Mosetana tribes so the latter have their Lules and Vilelas.

XXIII

Regarding the Names Tonocoté, Mataco and Mataguayo

101 Nothing better has been written about this than what Hervás has set down in his "Catálogo de las Lenguas" (Catalogue of Languages) on pages 168 and 172. He asserts that the Tonocotés are the Indians called Matarás and says the following:– "Matarás is a Peruvian word which is used to signify a grass which in Spanish is often called "espadaña," etc. The words Tonocot and Toconoté (read Tonocoté) have no meaning whatever in the Lule language, according to the missionaries to the Lule nation, who have told me that they have never heard that the Tonocotés or the Matarás (who are really the Toconotés) (1) were in any way related to the Lules. Yet the Indians consider other tribes related to theirs when they speak the same language; a missionary to the Matarás has told me that he heard his Indians speak, on occasion, a language which was unknown to him and that when he had inquired as to what language it was he learned that it was an ancient language of the Matarás; but since this

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1. Hervas always writes Toconoté instead of Tonocoté.

101 missionary knows only the Quichua tongue, with which he communicated with the Matarás, it still is a moot question as to whether the
191 Matará and Tonocoté languages are totally different or only dialects of the same language."

191 This short paragraph is one more proof of what I have been saying for some time, which is that the Fathers of the Company left more Quichua than they found in the regions which they evangelized. The Indians learn the neighboring languages with great ease: they have good memories, a well tuned ear and they pay much attention to everything which may be useful to them. [619]

101 The names Mataco and Mataguayo which in Father Techo refer to certain groupings and today are generic names of these tribes and their languages, are not the names with which the Indians used to refer to themselves. They called themselves Uicquñ.

To go into the etymology of the name Mataco without knowing who the first people were who applied such a name to these Indians would be a sterile job. It is probably a Quichua term or root and the only thing which might be said about it is this: that in the terms Churu-matas, Matará, Mataco and Mataguayo we find the common root Mata, which doubtless referred to some thing which was called by that name and which had to do with the persons or customs of these Indians or with the region they inhabited.

It is a strange thing that almost all the names by which we know the indigenous peoples of the Americas are artificial ones, as for example the name Guaraní; and the Matacos are by no means an exception to this rule. The Tobas called themselves Ntocovítt, and the Matacos, Uicquñ. Later, if we are able to prove that the Mataco "cq." is a mutation of "tt.," it may be seen that Uicq and Uitt are simply two variant forms of the same word meaning man.

Conclusion

000 An account has already been given of the Mataco Indians from the time of the coming of the Spaniards and the conquest of Tucumán in the sixteenth century. As the reader must have remarked we owed the information which we had to the Missionary Fathers, whose only object was to win souls for heaven and whose efforts in the direction of learning was limited to the end of reproducing for their catechumens, in a

000 more or less understandable way, the mysteries of the Christian religion and the teachings conducive to them. Their endeavors were often crowned with great success and where the pernicious example of long-standing but bad Christians did not interfere to sterilize the results of conversions, the new Christians did honor to their teachers and to the religion they professed, as was seen in the Guaraní missions.

The savage is an eminently conscientious man and does his duty with the regularity of a machine. It is the civilized man who has taught him to profess one faith and put into practice another. [620]

In spite of all criticism to the contrary it is unquestionable that the Missionary Fathers made their Indians understand the mysteries of our religion as well as many who are not Indians understand them. It is a fact, nevertheless, that for many persons it would be preferable to know the syntax and vocabulary of a new language without the intervention of interpretations which are sometimes forced with the object of introducing a new stream of ideas and concepts.

If this is true of the language, how much more is it so of the customs, habits, etc. of those who speak it. The missionary has only one dilemma: that which is not God's is the Devil's, and the God of the Indians, regardless of how good he may be, is a Devil in his eyes. Apart from all this, to think otherwise would expose them to grave charges from the direction of their superiors, and something worse from the direction of the Church.

We therefore always need the research of a lay person who will describe the Indian and his language to us without any preconceived ideas about either one. We want to hear someone who has studied the Indian in his savagery and who is ready to recognize that the evil of the good Indian may be a better thing than the good of an evil man who may call himself civilized: I am speaking of "good" and "evil" according to our idea of these two qualities.

114 This lack has been filled in a very special way by engineer Juan Pelleschi in his well known Otto Mesi nel Gran Ciacco, [Eight Months in the Gran Chaco], but there were missing from that great work the abundant and excellent vocabularies, dialogues and sentences which remained unedited in his travel portfolios. In these there is set down the way of thinking and of speaking of the Mataco Indian when he is "at home" in his forest and in his savage simplicity. Mr. Pelleschi has not wished to correct the Spanish syntax of the informant when the sentence was invented by him in one language and then the other, which gives even greater value to these illustrations of what the Uicquñ tongue is like.

1: Pelleschi--66 C-5(ca. 1875) 1896 SI7 Mataco SI7

114 Mr. Pelleschi has done what Dr. Leuz is doing in Chile for the Araucanos, and with as much ground for applause.

In the author's published work my secretary and I have had no part other than that of ordering it alphabetically and compiling a Mataco-Spanish lexicon, without which no study of a language can be considered complete.

As the original is in Italian I have had to translate that part of the book which is here reproduced, leaving the checking and correcting to the author. 000 The English understood the importance of the work before [621] we did and it was shameful that the most modern and most complete description of our Indians was written in a foreign language and had not been put into the national tongue. The Geographic Institute, by means of this publication has erased that black mark, and has gone further by adding the vocabularies etc., which are lacking in the original and which give so much greater value to this work.

It is not altogether impossible that the author will make a study, later on, of what is here published in order to perfect his essay on the grammar of the Mataco language. But even if he were not to do this, what has been published is enough to give us a pretty full grasp of what the language of these Indians is and what it is not.

As the translation has been checked by the author himself, those passages which may appear to be incomplete or in which it may be observed that extra material has been inserted, are to be laid at the author's door, as must also all new material with which the work has been supplemented.

In the key which precedes the vocabularies the derivation of 104 words and phrases will be designated together with the key letter. As will readily be understood, this is a valuable addition to the vocabularies, for a new word, heard only once and from one person is exposed to error, but when its lexical and phonetic value is attested several times over, little doubt can remain about it. On this score also is Mr. Pelleschi's work highly interesting, it being a step in the direction of a better understanding of the tangled phonology of the Chaco languages of the Guaycurú type, of which Mataco is an important part.

000 The map was made by Güido Jacobacci, Engineer, in accord with information which we have given him and with the help of the map of Father Jolis and Corrado, and also of Araos'. One can see

000 quite clearly there the Mataco Region, and the enormous territory which the nation which we call by this name used to occupy and still does. It is a further contribution to the geography of Argentine languages, being a part of the ethnic map of the Republic, and as such do we offer it to our readers.

Some of the names on the map have a date under them, which refers to a historical fact, that is, that that "Nation" was to be found there in the indicated century, but does not belong there now.

The first part, for which I alone am responsible, is complemented by a facsimile reproduction of Father Jolis' excellent map [621], so little known amongst us and which is nevertheless the best which I have come across of the region it covers. It is full of interesting historical and ethnic facts, and has longitudinal graduations geared to that meridian which was always taken as the starting place in maps and reports in centuries prior to our own.

In Mr. Jacobacci's map one can plainly see the huge area of Argentina occupied by the Mataco-Mataguayo nation; and it seems ever more strange that both they and their tongue could have remained so little known. Mr. Pelleschi has rendered a very real service to Argentine ethnology and linguistics with his two works, and the Geographic Institute's contribution is no less valuable, for through its good offices his work is made known and placed within everybody's reach.

(To be continued)

Bulletin of the
Argentine Geographic Institute

Volume XVIII

[173] The Mataco Indians and their Language

by
Juan Pelleschi
Civil Engineer

PART ONE

Chapter I

Geographic Situation

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The Matacos are hemmed in on the West by the Salta border line and on the East by the Toba frontier. Caught thus between two enemies, they have of necessity formed alliances, the Eastern Matacos with the Tobas and the Western Matacos with the white colonists, each group warring upon the other. In spite of this division the Matacos hold to their common language jealously, although it is true that there are slight dialectal differences to be noted. Thus, for example, the Eastern Matacos almost invariably say "quiá" and "tzá" where their Western counterparts would say "chá," regardless of the fact that any one of these expressions is employed without difficulty by members of the same tribe. The same happens with "quió," "tzó," "chó"; for example: "doe" can be "tzonaj," "quionáj."

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Each nation of Indians has its own territory and will go to war over the smallest patch of land just as we would. The land is also subdivided among the tribes of one nation and these may not overstep their bounds without causing war. These wars are very frequent for the many reasons set down elsewhere and because of the marauding spirit which dominates the Indians -- thus it is that whenever they learn that a tribe [174] has become rich, for one reason or another, in animals or

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721 belongings, they try to despoil it by surprise. These actions are always followed by deaths, wounds and imprisonment, which are cause enough for new wars, made without warning, to which end each has informers and spies in the other camp.

Fortune has for a long time favored the Tobas who occupy the best lands, that is, those bordering on the Paraná and Paraguay rivers for about sixty leagues inland and for hundreds of leagues along the rivers' courses; furthermore because of clandestine commerce with Corrientes and the Republic of Paraguay these Indians have been able to secure some firearms, and as they are the furthest away from the white man's ever closing ring, they naturally receive an appreciable contingent of rascals who are attempting to escape from them.

This is why the Vilelas and Chulupíes have become mixed in with the Tobas, which the Mocovíes, who used to live in the Southwest, in direct contact with the Santa Fe and Santiago frontiers, are also doing and who furthermore have so much in common with them as regards language -- for I have found among them many identical words. This very thing is what is happening to the Matacos.

Chapter II

Physical Characteristics of the Matacos

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142 The physical differences between the Tobas and the Matacos are noteworthy. Generally speaking, the Mataco is half a hand's breadth shorter than the Toba, though this does not mean that he is a small man when compared to us. He has an extraordinarily deep chest, a bull-like neck and well developed muscles; he is thick set, his head large, his face broad and with very salient cheekbones.

They have long lower jaws, very much inclined downwards; their foreheads are hardly ever broad but often seem even smaller than they are in reality because of their unkempt hair. Their feet are medium sized, their hands small, well formed and admirably joined to the
M arm, especially in the women; the hair on their faces is scanty. Of
142 their thirty-two teeth, the canines have seemed to me, in general
262 very little pronounced, which may have its explanation in the fact

142 that they habitually eat fish and fruit and very little meat, with some
[262] exceptions. The teeth in the young are good and whole, but in older
persons they are either lacking or are worn down [175] and ugly. The
enamel on their teeth is not, in my opinion, like ours, its whiteness
is the whiteness of bone, and not of ivory, and I am almost at the
point of believing that it is less resistant. Their gums and lips are of
a faded pink color. Can this be caused by their diet? They do not eat
[263] salt because they do not have it, but they like it very much and relish
it as though it were sugar when they are given some. Their lips are
thick, somewhat protruding and turned outwards. Almost all of them
have slightly slanted eyes, the lower apex inclined towards the nose in
the shape of an almond -- there are some, though, who have round,
horizontal eyes, which are inky black, the whites looking as though
someone had put a little blueing into them; while the whites of the
slanted eyes have seemed to me often to have a bilious greenish shade
to them, especially among the aged.

Their noses are long, straight and flattened, the nostrils also
flattened and extraordinarily wide, but not snubbed. This business of
[262] snubnoses is one of their great worries, so much so that they will not eat
mutton because they assert that doing so would make their noses take
the shape of sheep noses. This is a trick of their medical quacks and
[756] witch doctors who, in order to prevent the destruction of their flocks
and with them the loss of the little wool which they weave and is useful to them, have invented this pious deception so similar to others
which are familiar to us. So it is that all of us all over the world and
in all periods are alike in matters of artfulness and pride.

Their hair is straight and coarse, but in a very few individuals
I have noted slightly wavy hair, almost kinky, though I know not
whether it be so naturally or artificially. I have also noticed, in
some, incipient baldness. The hair of adult individuals is jet black,
[165] and white among the aged, but this is not often encountered, I suppose because only rarely do they achieve any age to speak of. Among
children up to ten or twelve years old the hair is often reddish which
is a strange phenomenon and calls to mind Salles' theory that primitive man must have had red hair. We may have here an example of
302 [765] atavism. They wear their hair long and unkempt, but cut it short for
a whole year when in mourning. This does not mean that they do not

take pains to comb themselves, particularly the women. I remember an occasion when I wished very much to obtain a paddle, made of "palo-fierro" [iron-wood--Translator] and having two blades, the blades ending in long, narrow points. It belonged to an Indian friend of mine who had quite a beautiful wife. I offered him a comb in exchange for the double paddle, but after having considered the matter for a while he refused to make the exchange. His wife seemed to me to be very sorry that the deal had not come off, and she must have made use of all her wiles for on the following day her husband spontaneously came [176] and proposed that we make the exchange. It may be that the reader would have thought better of my being a little more generous, but let it be remembered that if I had given my comb away I would not then have been able to obtain the paddle, which was of more interest to me than the Adamic Indian couple. M [302] M 123 593

What I have said of the Matacos can also be said of the Tobas, with this addition, that the Tobas are taller than the former Indians and generally show a larger expanse of forehead -- I do not know if they are actually broader -- owing to their habit of tying their hair up with a band. This information is true also of the Mocovíes and Chulupíes, all of whom inhabit the Argentine Gran Chaco, to the north of which, in the Bolivian Chaco, live the Chiriguanos and Cirionoses. C 142 102

Among all these Indians the skin color varies between that of new copper and mud, there being also, here and there, some with blackish markings or blemishes. C M 142

Chapter III

Some Ethnic Characteristics

It is customary to say that these Indians are extremely dirty, but I have some very serious doubts in that regard, for I have seen them, in the summer time, run into the river for pleasure's sake at certain fixed hours of the day in great numbers, both men and women, each sex in its own determined place. This would appear to be a custom and not a mere whim. In addition to this they often go into the water to fish. It is true that they seem to be dirty, mostly because of their M 515 skin color, and also because of the scratches which become caked, and 515 because of the sun's burning which wrinkles the almost scorched skin, especially on their shoulders; and finally because they go about barefoot and naked in the mud, through the underbrush and bushes, and as they lie down on the bare earth it is only natural that they should be covered with dust, just as we, who wash a thousand times a day do a thousand times become dirty again. They are not -- pardon the expression -- grubby, and I firmly contend that they are not dirty by nature.

An Indian camp is composed of an undetermined number of 342 dwellings, made by sticking branches into the ground and tying them [361] together on top in the form of a cupola. Onto this frame they throw quantities of straw until it looks like, not a hut, but a wagon so loaded with hay as to cover the very wheels.

They hurl the straw from quite some distance and yet so accurately as to cause wonder, so much the more as it is the women who do this work. A hut, once finished, is so strongly constructed that a man can stand and move about upon it, and it is quite waterproof.

[177] Each chief has his own group of huts, like so many barracks, and sometimes, especially on the occasion of a declaration of war, [622] many chiefs gather.

The huts are usually so low-ceilinged that one cannot stand up inside, but they vary as to length according to the rank of the family and the number of families which live in them. The long huts are somewhat humped, with two or more doors. The entrance ways are usually protected, on the windy side of the hut, by a fixed windbreak -- one must stoop in order to be able to enter.

A hut is divided into the following parts: the kitchens and the sections where sleeping, sitting, working etc. is carried on; however, there is no material separation between these parts.

The kitchen is nothing more than a swept space on which a fire [354] is lighted, but only when the weather is cold or when the family mother is in mourning, during which time she does not leave the hut for a year, [765] or allow herself to be seen, nor does she speak except when strictly necessary. The usual thing is to cook food outside near the entrance. There are as many kitchens as there are families.

The bedroom consists of that portion of the hut where they 352 place skins and clothes, if they have any, upon which they lie and which they put on when they go out if it is cold. On the walls at the

head and at the foot of their rustic bed they hang their possessions, 352
such as their bags, nets, etc., and some of their weapons. They sometimes stick four forked sticks into the ground, to a height of about a hand breadth above the surface, at the four corners of the bed, place two poles crosswise upon them and upon these, lengthwise, the necessary number of slats to make a sort of bedspring on which to spread skins and blankets. This type of bed is used particularly in the summer time in order to be cooler and to be free of insects and poisonous reptiles. The whites also customarily do the same thing, but they elevate their beds to a height of one or two meters above the ground to escape from tigers [jaguars--Translator]. I have slept on all of these types of beds and give my assurance that it is all a matter of habit -- nevertheless one can sleep much more comfortably on the ground. When the Indians break camp they burn all their huts.

In Mataco, "hut" or "house" is said in two ways: "hauet" and 196
"hepp" ("h" as in the German "haus" or "c" in "Florence"). Now "hepp" also means "smoke," "steam," "mist" and a kind of plant which looks like mist at a distance; "hepp" is also the name of steamship. And now, begging the reader's indulgence, is not the analogy perfect between this Mataco idiom and ours: calling the family or house "home" and a steamship "steam"? This is one more mental approximation between the Mataco man and the Aryan man.

The spear is stood upright at the entrance to the house, and to 411
one side are the bow and arrows, which lend a certain warlike appearance which [178] is pleasing. The houses are not constructed 361
symmetrically, but nevertheless an attempt is made to leave, between each row of huts, a wide street-like space.

It is a pleasure to see their fires when they are cooking. On the 252
very top are earthenware pots which contain various roots and wild 262
fruits, which usually need several changes of water. Among these there is a type of bean which is both good and palatable, and a root which is between a sweet potato and an Irish potato. The pots are 323
made and fire-hardened by the Indian women, who work them with care.

When the time for eating arrives, which, in the camp, is usu- 264
ally at eleven A.M. and at nightfall, fish on spits are brought out [252]
and crackle and hiss and smoke and drip in a way to make one's mouth water. On occasion a piece of meat from some animal will grace the 262

table, or a guinea pig, which are excellent tidbits, though the lack of 262
salt makes culinary success doubtful for one who has been used to it
from the very baptismal font. 123

The Indians like a white person to be free and easy with them and
to appreciate their things. So it was that I, when I was in their camps,
after having gained their confidence, would go about here and there
tasting their food, and they would be beside themselves with laughter
while I repeated "hiss," "hiss," which means "good," "good." Of 264
course one must eat with the fork which nature has supplied, with the 415
exception of soup which is drunk with the shell of a clam which is very 123
abundant in the surrounding lakes. Where I did almost jeopardize my
reputation was once when I had to drink from a vile gourd with a really
filthy lip. But I closed my eyes and a few moments later opened them
covered with glory, and triumphant.

On that occasion, upon taking our leave, the Indians indicated 123
that they wished to see us fire our rifles and we, to please them, fired
two or three times into the air. It was something to hear the yelling
of those women, and to see the tumult of boys struggling to pick up
the shells. How similar is man in all stages of civilization and age.

I was forgetting to say that the width of the huts is hardly ever [342]
greater than the length of a bed.

Chapter IV

The Indian Women

Let us now for a while take up the matter of the Indian women. 142
The Mataco women are generally rather short, but this does not keep 562
them from being, on occasion, quite charming and well formed while
they are young [179]. While living among them it is not unusual to 291
see them naked, but in the presence of strangers they never lack a
more or less protective fig leaf. On board our ship we had, for a good
many days, a man and his wife. The latter wore a pair of shorts such
as those we wear when we go bathing, and as she was young and well
built and good looking, I can give assurance that the situation was of
somewhat questionable benefit to some of our argonauts, forced
anchorites as they were.

On seeing this couple, almost in a state of stark nakedness, seated on a bench among the cylinders and pistons of the engine, motionless for hours, we were necessarily reminded of the earthly paradise.

When among strangers the women are quiet and impassive, but 157
when left to themselves they are full of fun and as playful as children. And this is generally the Indians' character.

The women take up a somewhat strange posture with their hands 516
when they are standing. As they have no pockets to put them in, or fan with which to occupy them, or what have you, they place them upon their breasts which serve as supports for their arms which together rest upon them.

It would seem that such a habit would enlarge the breasts, but 142
this is not so. The breasts are broad, it is true, but short and erect 145
while the women are young. After expertoe virum, and having given suck to one or more children, the breasts shrivel and retract in a very unaesthetic manner, to tell the truth. It is to be noted that both men and women age early there, and also die early, and to this must be attributed the fact that there are few gray hairs even when there are faces and bodies so wrinkled as to make one believe that their owners must be as old as Methuselah.

I have gone into some detail in this matter of the breasts because it is known that in other regions, according to what is said, the women, when they give suck, give the nipple over the shoulder to the child which they are carrying on their backs. The fact is that no such thing occurs here.

The women, along with the men, have abundant, coarse, [142]
straight hair. They wear it rather long but not as long as they might, 302
for it is shortened by wearing it in an unkempt fashion (which serves them as protection for eyes and forehead against the sun) and also by cutting.

They cut their hair, that on their faces as well as that on their [237]
scalps, with the jaw of a fish called palometa, which is armed with extraordinarily sharp teeth placed in two rows. The upper teeth dovetail exactly with the lower.

The palometa, the raya (ray--Translator) and the yacaré (alli- 136
gator--Translator) are the scourge of those who bathe in this river and the lakes or pools which are fed by it. The palometa snaps, tears

136 out chunks of flesh, and can even [180] be of some slim service, similar to that which is told concerning that fellow in the "Ricciardetto." It is an ovoid, laterally flattened fish. The ray is round, vertically flattened and has three barbs on its tail. It can make a very painful and dangerous wound with the middle barb when the fish is stepped on and lashes out with its tail. Some grow to be over a meter in diameter. It lies on the bottom of quiet pools, as close as it can to the bank; it would seem to be viviparous. The yacaré, a kind of crocodile, will without warning bite the leg or arm of an unfortunate father, drag him to the bottom and there devour him.

So it is that bathing, which was so necessary to cool ourselves off in the suffocating heat, was always embittered by the presence of these maneaters.

837 The married woman is faithful to her husband by inclination, education and fear. There are tales of terrible revenges wreaked by husbands upon their unfaithful wives, over whom they have power of life and death. While they are single they can be and often are free in their ways. It cannot be doubted that the whites attract their interest, 609 if matters of racial difference do not intervene, for the poorest white is always in a position to give better presents than is the richest chief.

291 These women love decorations and clothing, but have no use for skirts or corsets. They wrap themselves from the waist down in a blanket, and hold it up with a belt or cord which is hidden behind the fold of cloth. In addition to this they know how to distribute these rags in such a way as to accentuate their good figure and yet at the same time not encumber themselves, a skill not to be expected on first seeing them. Their dress consists of robes, and when they have any they put them all on, be it winter or summer, partly because of the nomadic existence they lead and partly because they like to do so. One might say that the saying: what wards off cold also wards off heat, is particularly applicable to them.

[822] Both men and women love bright colors (particularly red) and variety, but they also like white cloth. When they put on any garment they always do so in such a way as to leave one arm free. The women have a high regard for the kind of shirts which we wear.

301 291 The women make their own ornaments out of leather and broken shells, achieving a certain elegance of form, though with a greater or lesser degree of rusticity. They wear, from childhood, a sort of

leather bracelet, which they continue to wear until, it is said, they 291
give it to the first man who wins their favor. They knit shirts out of [301]
twine or in double thickness, very closely knit and yet elastic, which 286
look like coats of mail and have no sleeves, and are garnished in vari- 291
ous patterns with pieces of clam shell. These shirts are particularly
useful [181] in their fights and as protection against the thorns of the
forest, but the Indians have only a few of them.

Other ornaments are made of feathers, especially of the ostrich 301
[rhea--Translator], with which the women deck their foreheads, waists,
shoulders, wrists and ankles. The men put on much the same gear
when they are about to fight, go to feasts or to treat a sick person, as
will later be shown.

The women themselves also weave the wool gathered from the 286
few sheep they possess and arrange the natural wool colors in regular [531]
patterns of stripes or squares. They do not know how to make more [231]
ornamental figures.

In order to weave they stick four forked pieces of wood into the ground in the form of a rectangle, place a pole across each end to which they affix the warp threads and with a wooden blade about a hand breadth long thread and tamp the wool into place.

They call "weaving" *potzin*; the "loom" *noccaléi*, and the 192
"threads" *huoléi*. These words, which have not the least affinity with
the corresponding Spanish words, assure us that the Indians did not
learn weaving from the Spaniards -- not that one should lay great
stock either by similarities or by the lack of them in words to buttress
a judgment of this nature (on the contrary, it happens that the Mataco
always do all they can to keep from adopting foreign words to express
new things, preferring to use their own words with small changes) but
the fact of the matter is that we are not here confronted by one of
these circumlocutions. Another possible cause for error might be
found in the great difficulty which they have to pronounce words as
we do. Furthermore there is the habit of taking Spanish words and
modifying them to suit their own language as when they make from
"cabra" [goat--Translator] *caila*, and from Pedro, *Peiló*.

All work having to do with carrying, making tents, making pots, 462
cooking, weaving, looking for roots and making nets, is women's
work. Hunting, fishing, the making of weapons, warring, are men's
business. Looking for honey in the forests, where it is abundant, and 222
collecting fruit are activities common to both sexes. I suppose that 462

this shared work has its cause in that the last two mentioned products 222 must necessarily be gathered within a certain limited period and therefore 462 the Indians have need of the combined effort of all the workers they can muster in order to harvest all they possibly can.

For the making of nets they must first, naturally, begin by making 283 twine, which they call *niñ'hiői*. They get their textile material from a bromelia which in Quechua is called *cháguar* (a name now also used by the white settlers) and in Mataco *hũié*. They steep the leaves of this plant in water for a time and then comb them with a clam shell. Once this has been done the residue is put out into the sun to dry and whiten. The last stage is that of twisting the fiber -- a wad of it is held in the left hand and rubbed back and forth [182] on a leg, upon which they sprinkle a little gypsum in order to avoid getting hurt. This gypsum powder is called *maccotác-muc*.

The twine being thus ready they make not only nets with it but also ropes, which they call *niñ'hioi-less*, which means family or skein of threads.

Some of the Indians have special skill in making weapons, and 411 make them as a means of barter with their companions. They use a very hard wood for the bow, and ostrich [rhea--Translator] tendons or strips of hide for the string. The arrow shaft is made of cane, the head of some hard wood, often tipped with bone and barbed like a fish hook.

Chapter V

Marriage Customs

Those who do not know anything about the Indians may believe 152 that they lead morally and materially sterile lives. Yet this is not actually the case: the savage loves, hates and knows what ambition, enjoyments, dangers and glory are. He is acquainted with religion and with fear. In these primitive societies the whole gamut of human affections is experienced precisely "as among the whites," as Faustino used to say to me when I asked him about the intimate experiences of the Indian way of life.

Women are with them, also, a most important attraction or passion; and although a white person may consider her position an unenviable one as he sees her traveling beside her man under a huge load while he carries only his weapons, yet she is not treated any worse than the immense majority of women in our midst -- those women in our society who are able to pay others to work for them make up a numerically unimportant exception. 462

Furthermore when the Indians are on the move they are ever on the lookout for game and must be continually wary lest they be attacked. How then could the men be in a position to attack and also to defend themselves if they were loaded down by all their belongings?

The woman's role in Indian society is in perfect accord both with social needs and with her physical aptitude. She does not hunt, fish or fight, but takes care of the home, cooks for the family, and is always at work: She looks for roots and fruit in the forest; soaks chăguar leaves in water and spins twine from them; makes nets, bags and weaves; prepares food, repairs the home, ferments the beverages which the men drink; takes care of [183] provisions; helps her spouse in planting by placing seeds in the holes made in the skimpy trenches; takes care of the harvests...and is mother to her children.

In all the Indian camps which I have visited I have always been surprised at the continual round of labors performed by the women, who are always at work. In Mataco, "woman" is tzinâ and also quiécua or chécua, this last word also meaning "wife."

A man may have several wives, but only rarely does he have them all living under the same roof. The number of wives depends upon the husband's wealth and ability to support a number of families. There is no such thing as real wealth among these nomads, only wealth in movable possessions, if we may call them that, such as skins, cattle, and the ability to work and steal which the man may have. 595 422 556

Very few, possibly none, of the chiefs have only one wife. The wife may be repudiated and in that case can again call herself her own mistress; but only rarely does she remarry because it is usually the case that she has already lost her youthful attractions, because she does not give up hope that her husband will take her back, and because she is kept from so doing by the shame she would feel before the tribe. When a man repudiates his wife this almost always leads to quarrels and feuds between the families. 586

1: Pelleschi--80 C-5(ca.1875) 1896 SI7 Mataco SI7
Chiriguano SF10

In places such as these in which women lose their attractions at an early age and in which men are decimated by the constant wars, the custom of polygamy is a social necessity for the tribe which would otherwise run out of members, and a physical necessity for the men and for many women who would otherwise stay single. Nevertheless there are not lacking loose women, free in their favors, for whom the Indians use the name of amoeccue. M 595 M 837

The man is jealous and cruel to his wife if he suspects her of infidelity. While we were visiting the camp of Peiló we had the opportunity of hearing a husband, deep within one of the huts, beat and threaten his wife with death because she had been careless and fallen into the hands of a soldier. Nu-a-ilon-lã (I shall kill you) he ground out between his teeth. On another occasion a woman, after her husband had been absent for two years, took up with another man; the husband returned, lay in wait, ran after and caught his wife and slit her belly open with a knife before the whites could prevent it. This woman did not die and as soon as she was well returned to live with her would-be murderer.

When the Indians intend to get married they dye their cheeks and the region around the eyes red. The man will give his love a present at the time he makes his proposal and if the woman gives [184] an affirmative answer the man gives her a dowry of whatever he has, such as sheep, chickens, skins, etc. M 584 [302]

If the families approve of the union the couple goes to live near one of them, should they not approve then the pair leave the hut and often even leave the camp. Once consent is granted, the nuptial ceremony is the act of consummation.

Among the Chiriguanos, when a man wants to ask for a girl's hand he places a bundle of firewood and a small deer or other provision at her door; if on the following morning the woman lights the fire and prepares a meal with the food supplied, the proposal is considered accepted and the suitor repairs to the table. Some people hold that this is also a Mataco custom, but the facts which I have been able to glean about the matter do not confirm this. C 584

The Chiriguano chiefs, however, have a privilege, which is that they cannot be rejected by the women of their choice: this is a great stroke of luck for them. The chief reveals his inclination with the offering of a piece of meat or some other thing; the girl cooks it, and they then share both meal and bed. The chiefs, especially the C 584 622

generals, that is the ones who have several camps under their command, C 622
have at least one wife in each camp.

Two or three days after delivery, mother and child wash, the new C M 846
mother resting for only that length of time.

The father acknowledges his child and takes it into his arms with the following words: "This is my child." In some tribes it is customary for the husband to take to his bed when his wife is in labor, as an act of acknowledgement; and among the Chiriguanos the man takes his place beside his wife and for three days is cared for as if he had... given birth to a child! Then he gets up, but does not make any trips or work until seven days have elapsed, after which period the wife also gets up and washes. While the couple is in labor they eat nothing but water and a pap made with corn and bean broth; they abstain from eating meat.

It is quite common for a man to have two or more sisters simul- M 595
taneously as wives. I can also give assurance that every now and then [588]
a father will not disdain even his own daughter. If no one will ac- [847]
knowledge a child as his own the mother may kill it.

The Indians are very skilled midwives: the white settlers themselves use their services. M 844 It is said that they are extraordinarily expert in taking advantage of the precise moment of crisis, holding the patient in a more or less straight position, apparently even shaking her, but without doing her harm. To this activity they add words to which the Indians attribute [185] virtue and to which the whites, who do not understand them, ascribe even more. So is it always!

Let it not be thought, however, that in the matter of love-making C M 832
they limit their efforts to a more or less expressive pantomime. The fact is that they have words and expressions and a language which lend themselves admirably to amorous declarations and which they use. The harmoniousness of the Guaraní language is well known to all, it might even be said that it is too much so when used by the men and by the Chiriguanos, whose mother tongue it also is. But even the Matacos, the rude, unpolished Matacos who seem to be the last on the anthropological scale of all these South American Indians, have their harmonious expressions and the well-bred ideas which correspond to them.

I remember an occasion on board ship when there was among M 832
us a good looking Indian woman who was quiet, impassive and even

downcast and dejected. Faustino whispered to me: "Say a-aiss to her, with feeling." I said softly into her ear: "a-aiss," and the Indian beauty in spite of herself broke into an imperceptible smile for I had said to her: "You are very pretty!!" On another occasion I had gone to an encampment to witness the treatment given to an invalid by the Indian doctors; there was there also a young girl, the prettiest Indian girl I have as yet seen. 832

A lieutenant joined us and said to me out loud "What a good looking girl!" "Yes indeed" I replied. And the girl, back there in the shadows said: "Teniente toj tzî-la-taj" which means "the lieutenant is very handsome" -- but she said it in such a charming way, half ingenuous and half malicious, hiding her face behind the back of another person who was there and flashing at the same time such a meaningful glance that I really envied the handsome lieutenant.

Following is a transcription of a conversation between two young people: 521

He: "Who can that pretty one be whom I am liking so much?"
She: "Who can that good-looking one be whom I am loving so much?"
(This is a sort of endearing refrain which they apparently use a great deal) -- Then, coming close to each other:
He: "Every time I see you I feel a desire to carry you off -- who knows but that some day you will lie in my arms."
She: Who knows -- as we walk we make progress."
He: "If you love me let me caress you."
She: "You must not do so even if you love me, for you belong to another."
He: "There is no one who can reproach me. I am single, and if I were not single I would not speak to you like this -- Goodbye! I am leaving tomorrow; I shall be absent for two years..."
She: "Oh...I am so sorry! I shall miss you if you leave..."
He: "Don't marry anyone else while I am away...I shall bring you a necklace, a kerchief to cover yourself, needles and thread... Goodbye!" [186]
She: "Goodbye...come back soon."

I refrain from transcribing the Mataco version for fear of boring the reader. But tell me if in this dialogue which I have here set down the same feelings and expressions cannot be found which are common with us.

At a wedding which is properly celebrated with all the attendant frills there are alcoholic beverages made from the pods of the algarrobo and vinal, and from forest honey -- regarding all of which I shall write in the following chapter. 173 [585]

Chapter VI

Fermented Beverages

Natural Products of Domestic Use

The algarrobo is to these parts what the chestnut tree is to Europe in its usefulness to the people who live in the region. By observation I have found that it grows in the area between one hundred and four hundred meters above sea level and between 30° and 15° of southern latitude, between the mountains and the sea. It does not like dampness, which keeps it from growing even in those places which would otherwise suit it. In dry, hot places I have come upon it even at an elevation of seven hundred meters above sea level, but always in flat country. 137

The algarrobo is found in various situations. Sometimes there are whole forests of this tree only; sometimes it grows in company with others. In my judgment it is the most widely distributed tree in the region and deserves, for this reason, and because of its great importance to have a whole area or forest zone named after it. It is to be found, in fact, growing both in forests rooted in earth built up out of the waters when these lands were raised, and in alluvial soil recently washed down.

The wood of the algarrobo is ideal for most construction purposes (except for roofing) and carpentry, but usually has the drawback of being short. There oozes from the trunk a black resin for which we have no use but the Indians do. The fruit is in the shape of a pod and contains a somewhat sweet flour which is used to make bread and fermented drinks. 137 824

There are in the region three types of algarrobo: the white kind which has pods in color and size similar to our white beans, from which a good beverage is made and the flour of which could be used. The black kind with pods like black eyed peas from which an inferior drink is made; and the so-called [187] "patay" algarrobo whose pods, 137 like our white beans, are thick and produce a large amount of excellent 824 flour with which bread -- called patay in the Quechua language -- is made. The first two have simple compound leaves, that is, each leaf is made up of pairs of leaflets placed evenly along its axis, with small thorns at the base of each leaf. The third type of algarrobo has complex-compound leaves in which the secondary leaflets are subdivided into many pairs of almost microspoic ones, as occurs in the churqui (Acacia cavenia), and also has thorns between ten and fifteen centimeters long, though not large in girth.

In order to make patay (bread) which is only made in Santiago 252 and Catamarca in the basin of the Pueblos de Belen, the dry algarrobo pod, ready for grinding, is placed under a hardwood or stone pestle which is moved by a long lever. The pod, thus ground, is turned into flour, but the seeds, which are extraordinarily hard, do not even break. The flour is then sifted, poured and pressed into a pot which has been previously heated by being put out in the sun or near a fire. The pot is now sealed off with fine sand and then again placed in the sun or near a fire for a short while. In ten minutes the patay is ready, for the warming has no other object than to melt the honey contained in the flour in order to make it coalesce into a lump, this lump becoming very hard once the honey cools. Thus they make loaves weighing from four to six pounds and more, which can be packed into saddlebags, slung over the saddle and afford a delicious if somewhat cloying food. The flour is in some ways similar to chestnut flour. A slice of this, impaled on a knife and heated in the fire is a really superb tidbit, both in smell and in taste. Aloja is the 273 Argentine (1) name given to the fermented beverages of that region,

1. Cacan (?) Ed.

while in Quechua they are called chicha (2), in Mataco; hú-ná;

2. Chicha is made from corn. Ed. --
See: Acca and Asua. [?--Translabor]

in Mocovi: nắ-ná and nắnn-ná; and in Vilela; tsúc-cuě́.

In order to make this beverage, in Perū as well as among the savage Indians, the usual thing is to chew a part of the raw-material which is then mixed in with the rest. This smaller chewed portion acts as a leavening since saliva, as we know, contains diastase, found also in the cotyledons of seeds, which converts starches into glucose or grape sugar and so makes them soluble in water and fermentable, thus producing alcohol. The Indian knows nothing about all this but being as he is a keen observer he has discovered the effect of this chewing operation, so nauseous to the whites who see it practiced.

This same process was used in China in the making of [188] bread and in the East Indies in the preparation of fermented beverages. In our own midst, who is unaware of the custom indulged in by nurses and mothers of chewing the baby's food before giving it a spoonful of it? In spite of the lack of knowledge on the part of those who do this and of its foolishness and repulsiveness in the eyes of those who see it done, this custom has a very useful end, and science puts its seal upon it.

One often sees wooden and earthenware receptacles in the Indian dwellings into which people spit the pods which they have chewed during the day. In addition to this women and children, at certain hours, set to and break and chew pods, and the small children have a great time grabbing handfuls of pods in their fat little hands, cramming them into their mouths and spitting them over and over again into the pots. Often the grownups also gather there and then the preparation of aloja is an occasion for fun. The unchewed portion is ground in a mortar, which is always made of yuchan, a tree about which I shall make some comment later. The whole lot is then passed into a mortar made of a single trunk of that same tree and water is mixed into it immediately in quantity enough to make two or three barrels of aloja at a time.

Twelve hours later the aloja is ready. It has a bitter-sweet taste and is yellowish in color. Its sharp tang makes it pleasant to the palate. I prefer it in the Chaco to any other drink, including wine itself. Taken in quantity it inebriates, but the drunkenness soon passes and leaves no hangover. At least that is the way in which I have seen it affect others.

The season for the ripening of the algarrobo pods coincides with 824
that of the vinal, which is not so good in quality but which can be used

824 in making *aloja*. The *chañar* ripens before the other two mentioned above and is a sweetish, round, rather small yellow fruit with a stone, which is eaten either raw or cooked. From this fruit *arrope* is made, which is good tasting and has, in local opinion, medicinal qualities for the treatment of coughs and asthma. The *chañar* tree, while it is young, has leaves and trunk similar to the tamarind; the branches look like those of the eucalyptus.

Shortly after the algarrobo pods comes the *mistol* which is similar to our *azufaifo* except for this difference: from a mixture of its fruits with algarrobo pod flower, *patay* is made, and kept in skins and well kneaded. Together with these fruits, sometimes a little earlier, sometimes a little later, all the other fruits ripen -- in the Chaco in the hottest months which are October and December (spring and summer months) and further south, towards Tucumán, in November and February.

251 Through certain techniques of preservation the Indians are able to prolong the yearly period during which they can feed on this vegetable diet, particularly if the crop has been a good one. The harvest lasts between four and five months and is a time of carnival for the Indians [189].

343 To preserve the algarrobo pods they build small huts which they place on four posts in order to supply them with proper ventilation and to keep them free of ants and other insects. It is a pleasure to see these little constructions rising above the Indians' huts in the same manner as do our towers. Each camp takes pleasure in having more of these little granaries than do its neighbors. In the same manner do they keep *vinal* and some roots and fruits which can and should be cooked when dry.

273 When the *aloja* is ready, which is usually at eleven in the morning, all the men gather about the *yuchan* container, seated in the Moorish fashion. Then, with two or three long-handled dry gourds they dip out the liquid and pass it around to each other. Meanwhile they talk about their affairs: about wars, the crops, [521] news, odd bits of scandal, and guffaw at any strange happening or *quid pro quo*. Thus they continue for three, four or more hours. When the liquor is finished they fall upon the solid matter remaining. The women and children take no part in any of this.

824 They set a high value on the algarrobo pod. A famous chief, whom the whites called Granadero (Grenadier guard -- Translator)

because he was so tall, and the Matacos called Quiatzutaj, which 824
means Vilelón (large Vilela Indian--Translator), because of his
national origin and size, when I asked him how things were going
with him replied: "Well...I...I rich...I having...much... [556]
algarrobo pods...I rich." They are miserly with these pods and with
aloja, to the extent that they will not barter them except on very rare
occasions. Only in a niggardly way and half heartedly will they invite
anyone to share their aloja.

One morning I came upon a group of some forty Indians who 123
were sitting around a yuchan of aloja. When I made my appearance 574
and as soon as they recognized me they all began to shout: "John, John...yúc-cu-ás...yúc-cu-ā́s" (tobacco, tobacco), and I answered "hué-ni-tdé: niquiolá pac" (I have none, later I shall give you some). Only then did they invite me to drink with them and at my first refusal did not insist a second time, the chief saying to me -- "No my child...no...we...taking...you giving...tobacco." This was by way of politeness, in the Indian manner to be sure, but politeness nonetheless. I, to please them, made some effort to speak a few words to them in their own language and finally took my leave saying: "Amecná, nu yopil nuháuet...nutpinlá pac...niquioc-la yuc-cu-as..." (Goodbye, I am going home...I shall come back right away...I shall give tobacco). And all of them, full of pleasure because I spoke to them in their language and promised them tobacco shouted: "Amecná... amecná...tapil...ccaelitt (Goodbye, goodbye, come back soon). I returned after two or three hours with my pockets bursting with cut tobacco [190] and found all of them still drinking. As soon as they saw me they reminded me of my promise, which I thought they might have forgotten amidst the fumes of drunkenness. I distributed it to them and even when it was all gone they kept on asking me for more, upon which I turned my pockets inside out and shouted to them "namhuen, namhuen" (I have no more). They, satisfied with the eloquence of my demonstration, gave up their clamoring saying hée hée, which means "well, well"; but they forgot to offer me another drink of aloja.

While on the subject of greetings: these Indians have the cus- 576
tom of tapping the chest of their guests lightly and amicably with
their half-closed fist, accompanying these caresses with expressions
of good fellowship such as hée, hée, etc. -- (Good, good! etc.).

It is worth noting that although they are such tipplers, they do not drink anything with their meals, not even water. On board ship the Indian guests we entertained refused all beverages while they were eating. After they had finished eating they preferred to drink water by crouching beside the river and drinking out of one hand. 264

The Indians are great beggars and yet miserly with their own possessions where whites are concerned. This is understandable since they are poor. [609]

It occurs to me that I should mention something which, though out of place here, I must set down for fear of forgetting it later: 142 145

The Indian boys, until they are eight or ten have disproportionately large bellies, so much so that they customarily bind them at the level of the navel. Later on they lose their bloated tummies and grow into well proportioned men.

It seems pertinent to me to say that the algarrobo belongs to our family of the garrobas (Ceratonia silicua) and the botanists know it under the name of Prosopis algarrobo. Its importance is immense in the domestic economy of the savages and country people. It deserves close attention for this reason. The crown grows to some ten meters in diameter but is not very dense, either because of the small number of leaves or because of their shape, yet it affords quite a fair amount of shade. The bark is very rough and is similar to that of the grape vine. 137

The vinal (Prosopis ruscifolia) is a very small tree, yet boasts a sizeable crown. It is remarkable for its thorns which are from ten to fifteen centimeters long and sometimes a centimeter thick, and very dangerous if one gets a jab from them. The leaves, which are about the same size as acacia leaves but more pointed and somewhat rough, are said to be an effective remedy for eye ailments.

The scientific name for the chañar is Gurlioea decorticans; and of the mistol, Ziziphus mistol.

The fruit of all these trees are avidly devoured by all manner of beasts, and the algarrobo and vinal pods are the best possible fattening fodder for horses and cattle [191].

A type of fruit which is also to be found in a wild state, but in very limited quantity in my experience , is the plum. This fruit has a pleasant taste and is all the more appreciated for its scarcity.

During the aloja revels squabbles, fights and killings are frequent, and this not only among the Indians but among the Chaco whites also. 578

A couple of words now about the yuchan, also called palo borracho (drunken tree--Translator). It is a bombaceous tree whose scientific name is Chorisia insignis, and might well be called the cotton tree. It has a strange shape which justifies its vernacular name. The trunk is shaped like an oil jar, that is, narrow at its base, wide in the middle and narrow once more at the point where the crown forks. The trunk grows to a diameter of two meters and is covered with spiked bumps. At most it reaches a height of four or five meters and is often accompanied by a shoot growing at its base. The crown is at first made up of only two branches which later subdivide and form a wide crown of some eight, ten or more meters in diameter. The leaves are similar to those of the walnut but a little smaller and provide good shade. 137

From the bark, strips are cut which are used for tying bundles, as roofing material, to wrap and tie bunches of tobacco leaves and for any similar use. The Indians make their canoes from the trunk, all of a piece. In order to do this all they do is hollow it out with any old tool, since the wood is soft and easily worked when newly cut but later becomes harder than cork although spongy like it when dry. The Matacos use the name cuóu quiác for canoe, which in their tongue means "duck." 824 [283] [396]

But the thing which is especially interesting about the yuchan is its fruit, which in size and shape is like a lemon. When it is ripe, which usually occurs between November and January, according to its location, the lemons split into four lobes and there appears a plume-like puff of cotton, white as snow, which little by little is carried away by the wind. 137

One of these open lemons is about the size of a fist, and each tree produces hundreds of them each year.

The Indians make a limited use of this cotton, but the whites do not, although I have seen in Catamarca, where the number of these trees is small, white cloth made from this material which won prizes at the Córdoba exhibition.

In the Chaco there is an immense number of yuchans which grow mixed in with other hard-wood trees. If this cotton could be

137

used industrially, the yuchan and the cháguar (which has fiber serviceable in making rope) [192] as they are to be found over an enormous territory and grow without need of cultivation, would be of great commercial value.

Another interesting tree that has domestic use and may some day be employed industrially is the pacara (Enterolobium timboiva). It is a tree of great beauty, very tall, of large girth and having a great deal of foliage -- it is of the mimosa family. Its fruit is a flat, oblong, twisted pod of a dark chestnut color about an inch and a half long and which contains 12 percent to 15 percent of saponin. This pod is used [388] to get the grease out of clothes and wool.

To finish as we had started, I must add that the Indians are great 273 lovers of the alcoholic beverages common among the whites, and become so drunk as to be floored. Even in this detail are they like those who are not their brothers in Christ.

Chapter VII

Wars

The Indians are much addicted to wars, it must be confessed, 721 and they are perpetually fighting; it is -- if I may be allowed the expression -- a continual giving and taking.

One war follows another, either because the vanquished wish to avenge their previous losses or because the victors have begun to enjoy their victories. Causes for war are: having fished, hunted or harvested in foreign territory, or the need to annul an offence or the hope of gain.

These wars are not strategic ones in which one battle follows another until the enemy is helpless to defend himself; rather are they surprise attacks on camps with the object of overwhelming and pillaging them and carrying off cattle, boys and sometimes even women.

This is why the camps or villages, in forested regions, always 361 have flanks and back right up against the deep woods, where, if surprised, the inhabitants may find refuge, and where it would be impossible to pursue them as there is a veritable labyrinth of paths known only to the inhabitants of the village.

In order to gather together in a common place, in addition to 487
the tracks they leave they twist branches and handsful of grass at 201
crossroads in order that their companions may know where to find them,
they having prearranged the meaning of the signs.

[193] Another means of communication is by making fires. Dur- 202
ing our traveling about the Chaco we were continually surrounded by fires, either at close quarters or far away, fires which sometimes took on the proportions of colossal blazes. And often, when we thought that we were in absolute solitude, it would happen that upon approaching an Indian village we would be informed that we were expected, and we would hear tell of the order which had been observed in our march.

They make use, moreover, of many spies and informers. In 701
Mataco the former are called niguaiecque, and the latter gu'éicáss. [203]

They apparently do have some sort of tactical organization: thus they have a general chief, subordinate chief and petty chieftains. The first is called, in Mataco, canniat tizán, the second, canniat, and as for the last, I have forgotten.

The general chiefs are chosen at second remove, that is, from among the subordinate chiefs, who, in turn, are elected by the people. Normally a marked preference is shown for the late chief's sons, provided they be of age, courageous and good. But then, of course, we must say that in these elections the same passions are present which appear amongst us in our elections.

They also have another category of persons, whom they call [554]
nyát and corresponds vaguely to the Spanish "caballero" or the
"galantuomo" of southern Italy. So it is that they refer to any white [609]
persons whom they consider of quality with the name nyát. It is to
be supposed that a like distinction is made among the other Indians. In Peru and wherever the Quechua language is spoken, gentlemen are called Viracocha.

Once the general chief has been elected the subordinate elector chiefs go to call on him when they can, which visits are celebrated with the accustomed drinking and eating orgies. A general chieftainship almost always embraces villages far removed from each other.

The Matacos call those who visit them tzicki-ác.

The authorities among the Chaco Indians play an almost purely military role. In peace time they lose practically all their prestige,

although they retain their position of ministers of "foreign affairs," 701
representing the tribe before outsiders either to treat some matter, or to form an alliance for either war or peace. And even then their leadership is not of much value for the members of the tribe, the populace, are free to refuse to go to war -- although actually their pride only rarely allows them to hold back.

When a chief plans an attack he gets the advice of the old 721
men of the tribe and of other influential persons, and if these do not set their approval upon his plan he nevertheless invites those who will to follow him.

Sometimes, though, large scale invasions are planned by the allied chiefs of several villages. When we arrived at the village of Chaguaral, we found there a group of eleven or thirteen chiefs, all Matacos, who were awaiting the arrival of [194] their allies with whom, shortly thereafter, they invaded the territory of other Matacos who three months earlier had given them a good drubbing.

While they are on their way to wage war they vociferate 726
wildly, shouting both threateningly and happily. They dye part
of their faces and bodies black and sometimes muss up their al- [302]
ready unkempt hair until they look like "lost souls," in the opinion of a Christian Indian. On the eve of battle, those who have the wherewithal deck their hair, waist and ankles with feathers, preferring red or yellow ones, and tie any rag they may have with them tightly about their midriffs. When combat begins they break out with the most bloodcurdling yells.

This business of putting on warpaint is common to almost 000
all savages: it was the custom also among those whom the Romans called barbarians; for example, according to Claudius the Sigambrians used to dye their hair a brilliant red before going into battle.

The chiefs have the place of honour in the thickest of the 726
battle, which always results in the death of some of them. If the 622
invaders win, they sack everything, capture the women, the 727
children and cattle, parcel out the booty and set fire to the village.

They give no quarter to the warriors and only rarely do they 727
spare the lives of the older women because they distrust them as

spies or as bad teachers for the children they are carrying off. 727
The very old women are scorned as worthless. But the boys under ten or twelve are taken off and brought up as warriors and husbands for the strengthening of the tribe.

This custom ought not to appear more barbarous than that 680
which the Scythians, who lived between the Don and the Danube, used to practice, which was to cut the throats of all prisoners in order to avoid the trouble of guarding them while they lived out their nomadic lives. And what can we possibly say about this when the Romans, already Christian, hurled their prisoners into the circus, there to be killed by wild beasts and jeered at by the masses?

I make these comparisons merely by way of asserting that human beings are the same in all places and have been so in all periods of history.

With these harsh measures the danger and shame of slavery 727
is avoided, a thing which would anyway be incompatible with the nomadic life they lead, with their perpetual wars, even with the scarceness of food and finally with the independent character of the Indian himself who would prefer to kill or be killed rather than to be a slave. Nevertheless let the extraordinary influence be considered which such practices may have upon the existence and distribution of the tribes, for a series of victories gained by one tribe or by an alliance of tribes can bring about the complete destruction or disappearance of others.

[195] He who kills an enemy, if he has time to hack it off, carries away his scalp, together with hair, ears and even a strip of skin from the back part of the neck. This scalp is molded into the shape of a cup with the aid of a reed or flexible twig which is put in place and sewn around the edges. Right away, still dripping blood, it is filled with liquor and, grasped by the hair, is drained and passed around so that all may drink from it in honor of the victor and mockery of the vanquished. After having made several rounds in this way, the "cup" is grasped by the rim, liquor is poured over the hair until it comes streaming down and those present allow it to trickle off into their gaping mouths just for the fun of it.

I had, in my possession, one of these scalps which had belonged to a Toba chief who was killed by a Mataco friend when

that invasion took place which we had seen in preparation in the 727
village of Chaguaral. Unfortunately moths got into it and ruined it, and I had no other recourse but to throw it out since it was no longer worth sending to Italy together with some skulls and other objects I had collected.

This custom of scalp taking is common to all the Indians hereabouts, and is also indulged in by those living in North America. The strange thing is that it was also practiced by the Scythians.

The Germans also were in the habit of drinking from the [171]
skulls of their fallen enemies. Who does not know about Albuin the Longobard who made his wife Rosamund drink from her father's skull some 1300 years ago?

This Indian practice reminds me of something which, in my opinion, reflects the sagacity of these savages:

I was with the colonel of the regiment which was on duty on the frontier, on one of his periodic visits. Near a fort where an Indian tribe was camped the son of the general chief came to see him, (the chief himself did not make an appearance since he wished the colonel to call on him first) and made us a present of some very good and delicious aloja. As it happened that he had just returned from a raid upon the Tobas we asked him if he had not brought back a few scalps. The Indian, as though seeking an excuse for his cruelty said: "The Tobas take the scalps of white men and we take the scalps of the Tobas."

On this same occasion, seeing me dressed in the manner of country people, surrounded by army officers and standing beside the colonel who treated me with great consideration and respect, the Indians whispered among themselves: "Who do you suppose this one is?" And the more sophisticated answered "he must be some president or other!"

It seemed to me as I heard this idle chatter and banter that I was in the midst of a thickly crowded mass of our own lower classes.

[196] One of the superstitions among these Indians is to 721
sally forth on their raiding expeditions with the new moon. They 821
appear to attribute some magical virtue to it, yet they do not

customarily travel by night for fear of snakes and tigers [jaguars-- 721 821
Translator].

We are already aware of the fact that their weapons are bow [411] and arrows, lances and clubs, all made of wood. 325 They do not employ metal of any sort because they do not possess any and because they neither know how nor are able to work it. If they can get hold of a nail or a knife or an old tin pot they hold it in high esteem and value it greatly. They also use boleadoras ["bolas"--Translator].

They travel hundred of leagues in order to wage war, and 481 do so on foot and in a relatively short time for the Indians are amazing walkers. Naked and therefore light they travel with agility yet without seeming to. They go barefoot and therefore need to lift their feet less off the ground.

The chiefs never fail to exhort their warriors before the 721 battle, and just prior to the attack their captain shouts at them: "Comrades! Here we are now. Fight with courage and do not flee even when the enemy stamps on your feet." A hortative which seems to me well suited to its purpose and quite to the point since it concerns those who will be involved in hand-to-hand combat. They mangle the bodies of their fallen enemies 727 without any pity whatsoever, and in addition to taking scalps, they tear out their hearts, mutilate their members and submit them to a thousand other cruelties.

I do not know whether they dismember their prisoners before killing them or are content to cut their throats, as they would a sheep's, before tearing them to pieces. This is what they did to our interpreter Faustino: first they shot him with arrows by surprise, thus knocking him to the ground where he lay helpless. Right away they sprang upon him and slit his throat while he was yet alive and conscious. Then they cut his head off, tied him to a tree by his feet and stripped him of all he had on.

Here is a dialogue between two Indians after a battle:

First Indian -- "Now I shall tell you what happened on the return journey. I suddenly heard someone in the rear shout 'The enemy is killing our comrades down there in that dip in the road.' I immediately shouted to my followers -- 'Get into battle order, they are killing our companions. Do not flee, face the enemy even if he stamps on your feet."

Second Indian -- "Oh, how I would have liked to be there! The trouble was that I did not see you when you were leaving..."

First Indian -- "You should have seen it! We just sailed into them with lance and club and in a short time had killed a multitude. Oh, we were really avenged there!

"Now I am truly happy: we are even. We scalped one of them, cut the hands off another, tore the heart out of a third, cut the...of another and decapitated many..."

And so he went on making a detailed description of all the acts of prowess performed.

I think that they must attribute some special virtue to the enemies' members. I remember that on one occasion I had in my possession three Mataco skulls picked up at a place where four years previously some forth of them who had been taken prisoners had been killed. The floods had carried off all the skulls except the three I was able to salvage.

I took these skulls with me to my hut which was at a distance of about ten leagues, on the frontier, and put them in my room under a small table which served as my desk.

One stormy night I heard a noise near the door which was open. The puny light given off by the tallow candle only made it more difficult to see and I could not make out the outlines of a black object which was moving about in the darkness of the room. "Who is it?" I shouted, reaching as one may well suppose under the circumstances for the revolver which was lying close by on the table. "Friend...friend...that's all...." and a Mataco chief came towards me with a companion. "What do you want friend?" I answered. "Toba etec" (the Tobas' head) he replied. I picked up one of the skulls and handed it to him, adding "Toba catchia" (bad Toba). The Indian grabbed the skull with his left hand, and as though possessed, started to claw at it and to stick his fingers into the eye-sockets and gaping mouth and then into his own mouth as though to suck them, all the while jumping about and shouting confusedly.

This chief had found out about the skulls but was under the impression that they were Toba, his mortal enemies, and had come during the night to celebrate the occasion. 727

It happened that the local Matacos returned about this time from the sugar harvest in the Salta plantations which were about seventy leagues from my camp, and it befell that every day, for some time, groups of Indians would station themselves at my door and ask me for a Toba head. I would let them have one, always repeating, as it were a refrain: "Toba catchia, catchia. . . . " (bad, bad Toba), and they would go through the usual routine.

Chapter VIII

Religion

The Chaco Indians have no God. I don't mean only that they do not conceive of God as a thinker or philosopher might but that they do not even conceive of one as do even untutored whites or Chinese. 771

[198] It is affirmed that the Pampas Indians do have a God, but this report must be considered as a recent importation and due to the continual contact of the Pampas with whites and with their brothers from over the mountains who were converted to Christianity shortly after the conquest.

But if the inhabitants of the Chaco do not know anything about God they nonetheless have their form of worship: the cult of spirits and of the stars.

I believe that there can be no doubt that the Chaco Indians are, generally speaking, as primitive as any of the world's other Indians and savages.

Now some philosopher-historians assure us that man's first religious stage is that of fetichism, which means the worship of fetiches, a word with which the Negroes of Africa signify the brute objects of their adoration.

Without denying that this may be or may have been the case where the Africans are concerned I nevertheless believe, at least regarding our Indians here, that the first stage in religion is not fetichism but spiritism of a sort which will later be described.

It seems to me that some philosophers, among them, 771 Humboldt in his Cosmos, have pointed out this same fact and have given it a name which I cannot now recall.

It is very difficult to get any information from the Indians 123 regarding their beliefs: they, in spite of having a deep disregard 771 and scorn for the mysteries of the Christian faith, do all they can to avoid being ridiculed, threatened and catecized by their presumptious and intolerant enemies.

Faustino, a Christian and a refugee from amongst them, when questioned by me regarding any of their religious practices, would answer: "I do not know, sir -- the Indians are very distrustful."

The following which I am about to recount I gathered directly from some of them after having been successful in inspiring them with confidence by talking with them, giving them presents, being very friendly and having close acquaintance with them and by letting them see that I had a high regard for their beliefs. 776

Among the Matacos the spirits are called a'hót, and among the Vilelas, cokss.

These spirits live underground but at nighttime they come up out of the earth and wander about near men's houses; they also enter the bodies of persons and usually cause them to become diseased. The a'hót ride upon the wind, accompany storms (or 753 are indeed the very storms themselves) and dance around the villages, huts and persons whom they wish to injure. The most terrible a'hót is smallpox, against which the witchdoctors are absolutely powerless. So terrified are the Indians of this a'hót that when it appears in a hauet-éi (village) they all abandon it as fast as they can, usually setting fire to it and abandoning the sick there. In spite of this [199] smallpox wreaks havoc among 164 them, mostly, I believe, because of not taking the proper precautions (which is impossible, their houses and clothing being what they are) rather than because of lack of domestic and personal cleanliness which, in so far as I have been able to observe, is quite adequate. Practically all cases of smallpox prove fatal, and that is why one sees so few Indians marked by the disease.

Every man has a soul which, after he has died, goes down 775 into the earth to join its companions, amongst whom he enjoys consideration in proportion to what was his while he was alive and 775 amongst his neighbors of his own village. This belief causes them to show great reverence for those of their number who have died.

Despite the a'hóts' inclination for wandering about, they yet ever remain in the vicinity of the place where the bodies to which they belonged died.

The soul of a person who dies in a foreign place and who has not been given burial in his home territory, is condemned to wander alone, despised and sad in the midst of the souls of strangers.

I asked my guide why it was that fortune was so cruel with 766 those wretches who, through no fault of their own, died and left their bodies far from their native place; to which he answered: "The mere fact of these bodies having been left abandoned in a far off place by their companions and by the sons of the same tribe, was a sign that while they were alive they had not enjoyed the love and esteem of the others. The foreign a'hóts on seeing the soul of an outsider make an appearance amongst them reason in this way: 'if the person to whom this soul belonged was not honored by his companions or by the sons of his own tribe, nor given burial befitting a brother, then he was neither loved nor esteemed by his own people.' This being so, then they also shun him and leave him alone." I only repeat the rascal's words.

This reminds me of the veneration which the peoples of all nations accord to their burial grounds, and, in this matter of the souls of the unburied being condemned to wander, these Indians have the same beliefs as the ancient Romans according to what Virgil so beautifully expresses in the Aenead.

These beliefs are the basis of the ceremonies to cure the sick and to bury the dead.

But before entering upon their description I must call atten- 821 tion to a sort of star cult, especially amongst the women. These 795 heavenly bodies are the moon and the morning star.

When the moon rises the women leave their huts and, holding hands, form a circle and begin to wheel rapidly, jumping and shouting in honor of the silvery moon.

They do the same thing when the morning star appears on the eastern horizon, and pray to it that the algarrobo pod crop and other wild fruits may be abundant.

1: Pelleschi--100 C-5(ca. 1875) 1876 SI7 Mataco SI7
Mocovi SI8

Ma
At midnight also they sometimes break their sleep and men 795
[200] and women together form into a circle and jump and shout 821
in order to win the favor of heaven.

During lunar and solar eclipses they gather together to implore the cessation of the inexplicable phenomenon. Here, however, they have dealings with an a'hót whom they summon and fear.

These are the only acts of worship of which I have knowledge, and they show the inclination of these savages toward sabianism or the religion of stars; yet the sun does not play a part amongst the objects of their worship or of their summoning. According to Faustino the interpreter, they only get together to conjure up the sun's reappearance when it has been hidden behind clouds for a long time (an extremely rare occurrence in that region) or if a storm is coming up -- and even then it is not the sun but the a'hót itself which they conjure because they are being deprived of the light and warmth of the beneficial star.

One can therefore perceive that among these Indians also it is the women who start the worship process and who, as was the case amongst the ancient pagan nations, have found in the pale moon the element most suited to their condition and therefore more able and better disposed to protect them. The sun, on the other hand, so dissimilar from the temperament of womankind, seems to await the worship of men, but they are not so prone to be influenced by fears, hopes and prayers as are the women.

I have not seen idols in any of the places to which my Ma
curiosity has guided me to search for them, and my guides have 778
always denied their existence. The Indians' outlook however does not seem to be one which would find the acceptance of idols difficult. In addition to that semi-worship of the heavenly bodies which has been alluded to it is probable that every object in nature having particular characteristics, be they terrifying or beneficial or mysterious, calls forth some response from the Indian which may be close to adoration.

Mr. Braly, an engineer who has traveled in that part of the Mo
Chaco in the vicinity of the Salado River, assures me that the 778
Mocoví Indians of those parts will not leave the place where the aerolite is to be found which fell in the last century with a terrible noise and blinding flash of light

aerolite is to be found which fell in the last century with a terrible noise and blinding flash of light.

Whatever the case may actually be it would seem that the wandering life led by the wild tribes of the Chaco must needs exclude the possibility of idolatry.

How could a tribe continually on the move load itself down with the kitchen gardens required to grow the onions and garlic of the Egyptians? It seems logical that anything bulky and cumbersome would have to be eliminated. How could they worship gods who were loaded upon the rumps of horses, or other mean and vile places, or tied to ropes and whipped in order that they remain docile and not abandon the tribe while on the march?

[201] Or how could its prestige and terrible mystery be preserved amidst the pellmell confusion of constant relocation? And how could each one be thinking about his daily bread while on the march and also on the discredit on both gods and priests should they be made prisoners and destroyed by some enemy in ambush? Idolatry would therefore necessarily be directed toward small objects requiring little care; but these are the very last to draw worshipful attention and never actually do so unless they are a marginal part of a much larger religious context, sparks of the unsatiated caprice of common adoration such as the little intercessory saints kept in certain of our families for their private use.

Apart from this the notorious ease with which the Indians abandon their tribe, their chief and their witch doctors, together with the practically nonexistent prestige of the two latter except during wartime or when some danger threatens, confirms the preceding arguments.

Chapter IX

Religion (continued)

For these Indians God or the devil are one and the same 776
and they give them the same name which, as has already been

said, is a'hót among the Matacos. 776

This confusion frees them, at least in so far as language is concerned, from the vice of intolerance which is so strong with us. So it is that they call our church tohuó-hoto'hi which literally means: "that which contains the a'hóts," that is, "the a'hohi or Christian gods."

This is also the term for cemetery, in which they are in agreement with the inhabitants of those parts who use the word pantheon, which among the Greeks was reserved for demigods and with us for persons of great fame.

In the Chaco and in the whole northern part of the Argentine Republic where people are more democratic, egalitarian, ironical and also ingenuous, the term pantheon is used to denote a plot of cleared, grass covered land. This plot is quite open to access and allows free entrance to jaguars and dogs who go there to feast at the expense of the fresh corpse of a white, Negro or mulatto, but certainly not of a Greek demigod or of even a member of more modern divinity!

At this rate there will come a time when the word pantheon will sound offensive.

Not only are the a'hóts able to enter into people, bewitch 776
them, become incarnate (allow me the neologism) in them and in [202] elements of an evil nature such as storms, smallpox, famine, etc. but they are also able to wield daggers and even shoot with bows and arrows.

But it seems that they only indulge in this business of 791
shooting people with arrows when called upon by the witch doctors who, in Mataco, are called "hâyagüé," and in Chiriguano, "ippaya." This seems also to be the case with the "gualicho" of the Araucano Indians, who in fact have a verb to express this action, which is "cúllin." The corresponding Mataco verb is "ioco."

It can readily be understood why the witch doctors have 411
chosen the arrow as the preferred weapon of the evil spirit, since 791
it is the only weapon in use among the Indians which lends itself to mystery and deceit because, as it is a projectile it can be loosed from any quarter and from afar, the bowman remaining hidden.

The Indians have great faith in the power of their a 'hót. One of my Indian guides, Tajo ["slash" --Translator] by name (so called because he had a scar on his face) in order to prove to me the indubitable power of the a 'hóts, and the crass ignorance of the whites who deny their existence, told me the following: 609 776 [557]

"It happened that a tribe was returning from a sugar plantation in the province of Salta. It was the season of algarrobo pods and one night all the people were celebrating, singing and dancing. Suddenly they became aware of the approach of a white man who was singing -- they could hear the noise made by the horse's hooves and by the large silver spurs.

"As soon as he arrived at the place where the people were gathered he halted and began to scold them for what they were doing, wishing to put a stop to their activity. The people did not like the white man's interference and said to the hayagüe ["witch doctor"--Translator] that he make him go away. The hayagüé, unable to bring this about by peaceful means said to the white who was insisting on stopping and profaning the celebration:

"'Now you will see if we are useless people and how strong is the a 'hót.' He bent down, covered himself and shouted to the a 'hót: 'Strike the white man down with an arrow and make him see if it is true that we are worthless people.' 'It is well,' answered the a 'hót.

"Immediately a sound was heard coming up from beneath the ground, like the snapping of a stick. It was an arrow which had struck home. The white man suddenly slumped from off his horse. He was dead. The a 'hót had shot the arrow into him because the white man had not wanted to believe in the a 'hót."

The whole tribe swears to have witnessed the whole thing. 771

It is remarkable that the object, if not of worship then at least of recognition, be of an evil nature; for in the last analysis the a 'hót is nothing [203] if not an evil power or one capable of evil. If we wish to consider such a recognition as the first glimmering of a religion, then we must confess that religion has as its base, fear of evil and the desire to command it. 776

This state of affairs which is found among all the Chaco Indians is present also in the other savage nations of America, though admittedly, there are some -- in North America for instance -- among whom the existence of other invisible and good powers or beings have been recognized, called "manitos" and "oquis" by some. 660

Regarding this problem the Americans reason rather naively, though with a certain amount of wit: "why should one worry," they say, "about a being who is by nature good? Surely we need fear no evil from him because if he is good he will not wish to harm anyone." A metaphysician would say the same thing.

It must be confessed that all religions are a little weak regarding this (for want of a better term) original sin; for all preach or impose expiatory sacrifices to placate the supreme being's wrath.

Among those Chaco Indians who still preserve some hazy tradition rooted in the missionaries' teachings, a certain ceremony prevails, possibly the only one of a religious nature, which parodies a Christian rite. From time to time they gather around their old men and chiefs, the women on one side, the men on the other. In the center, on a pile of flowers they place an a'hót, a child who is to be a witch doctor. While at these meetings they talk, smoke and drink, and then go their separate ways saying that they have "been at mass." The witch doctors keep up a constant conversation with the God Child (1), and report back to the people what he says. 791 796 [797]

In this ceremony as in all others the wizard or witch doctor always bends forward, covers himself, directs his speech downwards toward the ground (beneath the surface of which are the a'hóts). He first speaks in his normal tone of voice and then answers himself in penetrating, muffled tones which he varies to suit the nature of the particular a'hót, and the people think 791

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1. This function of "Child Witch Doctor" may be an Indian custom because something similar to it is to be found amongst the other Chaco Indians. (Ed.)

that the a'hót is really answering, not realizing that it is a ventriloqual trick. M 791

I have remarked a number of times in these notes that the witch doctors are the mediators between the a'hóts and men, but [756] they are also, in addition to this priestly function, doctors, -- in fact they are priests by reason of their being doctors.

The association of religion with medicine seems to be a 000 constant factor among primitive peoples and also among the uneducated classes of the present civilization. This fact provides fuel for reflection of a philosophic-historical type. According to historians there is every indication that it was already present among the American peoples and even Oviedo mentions coming upon it [204] in the island of Hispaniola. Robertson, that sober and wise historian of America explains the phenomenon succinctly when he says: "Superstition in its primitive form had its roots in man's natural impatience to free himself from a present evil and did not grow out of fear of the evils which awaited him in the life to come. So it is that its origin stems from medicine and not from religion."

I have no indication that the superstition of these Indians goes together with any cruel practice, nor have I read anything to the effect that this is the case among the other American savages.

The luxury of cruelty seems to be the exclusive prerogative of religions, among them being those primitive ones of Perú and, especially, Mexico.

Chapter X

The Cult of Graves

C 764 172

The Indians practice a "grave cult," and it can be asserted that they have always done so.

Near the city of Santiago del Estero I have seen their burial mounds and the earthen jars they contain.

1: Pelleschi--106 C-5 (ca 1875) 1896 SI7 Mataco

Chaco Indians SK4

These mounds are to be found on the edge of a bluff overlooking the old bed of the present Dulce River. The rain's erosion and the excavations of men have uncovered a great number of these jars which come in various sizes. Some are sixty centimeters high by forty in width; some are crudely made, others shiny and decorated with intertwined strands and geometrical line designs. Into these jars the ashes or bones of the dead were placed. 764 172

The land downhill from these bluffs, which is separated from them by a slight rise, is overgrown with ancient algarrobos and other trees whose habitat is that of new alluvial soil, that is, alluvial soil washed down by rivers such as are drawn up by our present hydrography. On emerged or alluvial land of periods prior to the present one, which were caused by climatological and hydrographic conditions of a different nature, such, for example, as those of the glacial period, other types of plants flourish. This is a personal observation of mine of which I am absolutely positive and which has also been the subject of official reports.

There can be no doubt then that when these burial places were made the river ran at the foot of the bluff. And, water being the [205] first necessity of life sought after both by the savages and by civilized man the world over we may deduce -- in addition to the fact that a considerable period separates us from the time when the burial ground was in use -- that even at that time special care was taken of the dead.

In Calingasta, in the San Juan mountain range, sepulchers are to be found in the form of wells, covered by a slab but not lined since the ground there is very solid. Other objects have been placed beside the body, such as a kind of deer and, as far as I can make out, a dog. In one there was discovered a polished stone object having the shape of a rigid fan and which was doubtless a mirror. This was also the custom among the Etruscans, and I remember that in one of their graves, in Sabana de la Maremma in Tuscany, engineer V. Busatti found a silver mirror, which I saw, with a magnificent engraving which represented, if I am not mistaken, the sentencing of Paris.

In another part of San Juan near the Pie de Palo range, beside a pile of painted rocks (1) an Indian death room was found

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1. Local term for petroglyphs. (Ed.)

Chaco Indians SK4
Chiriguano SF10

with many bodies in it.

Cha 764 172

In the mountains of Salta and in the highlands of Jujuy there are graves ("Huacas") in the shape of small vaulted stone ovens (2) similar to those used in that locality by the country people. There are often as many as three bodies in these graves squatting on their haunches and wrapped or covered with clothes and sometimes having beside them pans containing objects of silver and gold. Nowadays the Christian Indians descended from those Indians who were under the sway of Perú and the Incas, hunt around among these graves and gather the bones so as to have masses said for them (so they say) but they almost always find that the greed of others has been there before them so that although they find the bones they rarely come upon the precious objects which were buried with them. One cannot say what kind of clothing they wore for as soon as the graves are uncovered contact with the air reduces all to dust.

Chi 764

The Chiriguanos of the Bolivian Chaco also place their dead in large pots or jars and bury them beneath the floor of their huts. Each house is thus a habitation for both the living and the dead and, be this either a cause or an effect, or both in combination, the fact is that the Chiriguanos are not nomadic. They paint the above mentioned jars with great care, the jars being of various types and variously decorated in accord with the wealth of the family concerned. The pots are fired and the glazing material, which is a sort of red, bad smelling tar, is applied either on [206] the unbaked or baked clay. If the former, the result is a more shiny, light colored finish, if the latter, then the end product is of a darker hue.

Chi [323]

On the lid of the buried jar a fire is kept going for a whole month, doubtless (if this report is true) to destroy the foul gases given off by the rotting body.

Those Chiriguanos who are poor and cannot afford these jars bury their dead in a trench inside the hut and then move away until the bad odor has ceased.

2. Also called "trojes" ["granaries"--Translator].

Chiriguano SF10

The bodies of those who have been executed for repeated murder are flung out on the ground or else burned. C 766

Some Indians, among them the Chirionoses (1) who live on the Bolivian or Brazilian frontiers, bury their dead in the trunks of trees. To this end they go into the thickest parts of the forest, choose out a yuchan tree, which has a bottle shaped trunk and is as soft as cork, fell it and place the corpse inside it, covering it over well to keep the crows from getting at it. When the Fort Sarmiento road was opened up a short time ago one of these burial trees was found, quite by chance.

The Matacos make a practice of burying their dead under ground, although some tribes, those towards the east who live close to the Tobas, burn them. This practice, one would suppose, is one which they have in common with the Tobas. M 764

It is to be supposed that the beliefs held by the Matacos in this matter of interment are also held by the other wild Indians with whom they are continually in fighting contact, either as allies or as enemies, and with whom they share the same spirit cult.

Now the Matacos, as has been said, believe that the soul of the dead has no rest until the body has been buried within tribal territory. I have no reason to believe that an exception is made for those who die in battle. They believe also that the soul, which they call "hésék" (they give the name of "tzan" to the body, and "hőt" to a corpse) does not descend into the earth to be with its companions until the body has decomposed, either by rot or by fire. They say that until this happens the soul wanders about around the family hut, sometimes becoming visible and complaining about its lot. M 775

This business of the appearance of souls (or ghosts) and their cries of lamentation is the subject of a great deal of foolish old wives' tales among them, almost to the point of their not talking about anything else, and I would wager that it is the cause of as much fright among them as it is amongst us. M [521]

1. Tribes of the Chiriguano type. (Ed.)

[207] It follows that even when an individual has died outside his territory, his relatives and the members of his village will go and bring the corpse back to home ground for burial. But since transporting a corpse would be a very difficult matter for people who customarily get about on foot and who often have to travel hundreds of kilometers, they wait for such time to pass as will allow the corpse to lose its flesh, and then all they need to transport are the bones. This practice is in no way detrimental to the deceased for his soul cannot go under ground in any event until decomposition is finished. M 764

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When death strikes, if it should be morning, then that very afternoon, and if it should be evening, then the very next morning, the corpse is placed in a grave. This grave is not filled in but is covered with branches so that the body may not supply a meal for jaguars, dogs or carrion eating birds. Once decomposition is over the remains are either burned, as has been said, or the grave is completely filled in and covered.

When a person dies far away from home, his body is wrapped in a net, in a squatting position, and then placed in a tree and covered so as to protect it from the above mentioned dangers; about a year later, or before if opportunity offers (but always when the bones are left) the relatives of the deceased return to pick up his remains and take them back to his hut where they are given the longed for burial. M 766

But wherever they may place the corpse they always put a pot full of water beside it. The reason for this is that just as soon as the individual dies the other departed ones gather round for a visit; and both they and he also might possibly become thirsty, and that is why he is given the wherewithal to slake their thirst. Anyone who knows the value which is placed on water in this region will understand why it seems important to the Indians to place some of this element at the disposal of the deceased, and will also be able to deduce that a bond of hospitality and fraternal feeling exists which continues even beyond the grave. Furthermore, our own pagan ancestors believed and practiced similar rites. M 764

As the Chaco Indians are poor and go about naked they cannot take advantage of the occasion of the death of their loved ones to show themselves off in expensive black clothing, as the whites M C 765

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do, or in white garments as do the Chinese; but they show in their own way that they are in mourning by shaving their heads which are the only parts of their bodies with covering. The women, instead of parading themselves about in their somber garb in churches and public places, hide themselves away in their huts and avoid all contact with their neighbors; they refrain absolutely from talking and apply themselves more diligently to their household duties. They continue in this mourning for a year, during which time it is not proper for them to remarry. Whenever they must needs go out they take the most secluded paths and if one should chance to meet them they cover their faces; they will not talk on any account and avoid any occasion for doing so. It happened that travelers [208] who have met up by chance, in out-of-the-way and therefore suspect places, with women like these who are withdrawn and will not speak, have mistreated and even killed them, being ignorant of the custom.

In addition to shaving their heads they also wail -- a monotonous expressionless chant -- which is apparently dictated by convention and accompanied by the beating of the "pin-pin" which, as I believe I have already said, is a mortar hollowed out of a tree trunk with a tool or with fire. Water is poured into this mortar and then a skin is stretched tightly over it to form a sort of drum. They beat upon this skin with a gourd filled with grains of corn or algarrobo seeds.

They wail in unison at certain stipulated hours, but the widow or mother does so without ceasing, even when she walks through the streets about her business. Relatives and friends accompany the deceased to the grave, and if he be a well loved chief or some famous witch doctor then the whole tribe will go.

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Chiefs and particularly famous witch doctors occupy positions of honor among the a'hot who await them, and their influence in the spirit world will be in proportion to the esteem in which they were held by their neighbors, of which the funeral rites will be a yardstick. And so when one of them dies the Indians who are gathered about his bier beg him to bend every effort in their favor when he is far off among the a'hót, and try to influence the storm a'hot and the plague a'hot or the famine a'hot to pardon their villages and visit their enemies. The dying

Chaco Indians SI4

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man promises to do this and his companions by way of reward do M
him even greater honor at his funeral, thus augmenting the de- 763
parted one's power for good in the spirit world. Do we not do 775
likewise when we implore those who die in the odor of sanctity 554
to intercede in heaven for us in our pilgrimage through this vale of 766
tears? 800

Sorrow points up the basic similarity in all men, and the harmony of the human character in actions and speech, hopes and doubts, is never manifested more clearly than when confronted with a grave.

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Chapter XI

Doctors

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In the Chaco there are both male and female doctors, but 755
very few medicines; treatment being purely empirical because 753
of the ignorance and superstition of those Indians. [209] [756]

It is strange that the wild inhabitants of the Chaco have not discovered remedies, but that is the way it is, in part because of their lack of intelligence but mostly because of the superstition which grips them in all matters respecting disease and sickness.

They firmly believe that sickness is caused by an a 'hot's getting into a person, and therefore all efforts are bent in the direction of getting rid of it by the only means possible, that is by conjuring it out.

It follows logically from this that their doctors cannot be other than witch doctors or priests or what have you. Apart from this their very superstition is a consequence of each person's need to free himself of a present evil and his ignorance as to how to bring this about. That generous measure of wit native to man does service as a middle road between ignorance and superstition.

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Nevertheless they realize their lack of efficacious remedies C
and also the superiority of the whites in this matter, in whom 648
they have great faith as healers; while the poorer and more 755

ignorant whites, in their turn, have a great deal of faith in the C M
Indian witch doctors. 755

I know for a fact that rich ranchers have called Indians to 648
come and treat them.

The witch doctors attempt to cure their patients by exor- M
cising the a'hots by shouting, leaping, and blowing and spitting 755
into the sick person's mouth. They prescribe, along with this exorcising activity, certain homeopathic remedies such as dieting, bathing and I believe massaging also.

The faith which they place in their incantations does not wane even in the presence of white man's medicine.

It happened once while we were on board the river boat that M
the boat stuck fast in the mud. A number of Indians surrounded 123
us and a group of them brought forward a sick Indian for us to 755
cure. We did not have our interpreter with us on that occasion, but I was able to put my notes to some use and finally understood that the invalid had been bitten by a snake: -- "Chiasquietáj-Kiá" -- "snake-bite remedy" was what they were saying.

We had a small medicine chest and hurriedly applied ammonia to the bite. It was extremely important for us that the outcome of our ministrations be a positive one for we needed to gain prestige and also friends among the Indians, for relations were strained and some days previously we had been ambushed by a group of them who had then fired on us at point blank range.

Our patient, however, improved very slowly and there were times during the first three days -- a superstitiously critical period -- in which we had serious doubts of his recovering, because the swelling kept growing upwards towards the groin and belly and, if it had reached the area close to the heart all would have been over for him.

During this whole period of treatment -- which was carried on in a pretty rigorous fashion, [210] the situation hardly calling for ladies with kid gloves -- the patient took only water, as the witch doctors prescribed, and then, during the night while the crew slept, the doctors would begin to chant húu húu húu... hée hée hée... híi híi híi... and then once more húu húu húu, etc. Every now and again they would spit and blow like so many bellows upon the wound and other parts of the body, keeping this up for hours on end.

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I, who used to stay up very late, both to do my stint at guard duty and to take advantage of a few uninterrupted hours for study, used to take up a stand close to them. At first my presence there made them keep quiet, but later on, taking heart at my reiterated hiss tzilataj ("very pretty"), and seeing that I did not make fun of them, they continued in spite of my being there.

At last, after twenty days, the sick man got well.

One of the very strange treatments is the one which they administer to those who have been poisoned by a sting ray, which fish can administer an extremely painful and sometimes mortal wound. This treatment consists in placing the offended part, which is usually the ankle, over the smoke given off from the cracks in burning palo santo [lignum vital --Translator], which is a resinous wood, after which a woman in her menstruating period is to sit astride it. I have been assured by whites who have made the experiment that it is a very efficacious remedy. 752

Every treatment for sickness or wounds however needs, if it is to have any virtue, to be in the hands of a witch doctor (male), or at least in those of a female witch doctor. 756

Not everyone can be a witch doctor, and just as the members of this profession make their patients pay according to the seriousness of the malady and the means of the individual, either in skins, animals, food or other things, so also does this profession have its seamy side in which quarrels and deception occur. In addition to this and in order to get greater prestige they shroud themselves in mystery and the supernatural. So it is that in the village of Granadero the Indians, speaking about a young man who was already embarked on this career, said that as a boy he had vanished and then reappeared after two years which he had spent underground among the a'hot, these a'hot having carried him off in order to instruct him in the art and imbue him with the virtues of doctor and priest.

While on the subject of these frauds I must tell of an occasion when things almost took a bad turn for me. I went to call on Chief Granadero who was just recovering from a long illness. I had with me, as is my custom, a pocket inkwell and a pen. Granadero noticed these things and asked me what they were. I, thinking to please him flourished the inkwell and pen and set about writing, but saw in a moment that Granadero had become furious and menacing -- his doctors had just cured him of the a'hot which 123 755

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had been tormenting him for so long, and had extracted from his 755
body several pens and a pencil, under guise of which, they said, the a'hot had been harming him.

[211] The women seem to be extraordinarily able as midwives. 844 759

With singular ability they wait for the critical moment of labor and then, raising and holding the mother-to-be they shake her and keep uttering their customary exorcisms until they are successful in their endeavors.

However, if one wishes to be in on an interesting spectacle 755
one must see an invalid getting the full treatment in a village.

One evening while I was camped near a tribe I became curious on hearing a great sound of voices and the repercussion of strong blows on the ground. As my relations with these Indians was of the very best I did not hesitate to go to see what was afoot. In the midst of the village, in a sort of central square, I saw a circle of black figures illuminated fitfully by the blaze of the fires; they were the squaws and men who were sitting on their heels smoking in silence. In the center of the circle, in a space of about eight meters, four robust men with ostrich feathers and timbrels at their ankles, wrists, waists and on their heads were running back and forth, with their hands raised, gesticulating wildly and rattling some gourds half filled with seeds which added to the noise. They ran about singing and howling, and one could see that they were panting and covered with sweat. They would straighten out their legs and pound the ground with the whole sole of their feet, and as they did this they would raise their voices in a mad, desperate way, with their arms on high, heads to one side and body curved over.

Alternately two of them would stop, crouch, move their heads rapidly from right to left and up and down, howl and blow and spit on the backs, legs, heads and mouths of two invalids who were seated in their midst.

The two sick men were suffering terribly from the a'hots which
had entered their bodies in the form of rheumatic pains, and the [753]
witch doctors were attempting to drive them out with their infernal dance. This, it was understood, they would be unable to do until they managed, by means of their unbridled racing about and thumping, to tire and intimidate the a'hots who, with evil intent

and at the very same time were dancing precisely the same dance 755 underground immediately beneath them. The object of making so much noise was to intercept all communication with the sickness *a'hots* who were in the two men. The best doctor is the one who most jumps, howls and beats the earth with his feet.

The public who surrounded these goings on was there to give importance and greater virtue to the treatment, but the suspicion was in the air that the *a'hot*, on leaving the body of the possessed might take it into its mind to enter one of the other persons present.

This scene convinces me that: among the Indians, doctors earn their bread by the sweat of their... whole bodies; that among them also deceivers, by dint of much deceiving, finally [212] deceive themselves; and that the rabble was really convinced of the efficacy of the exorcisms.

And I was about to smile, moved by scorn and pity, but I remembered that *c'etait tout comme chez nous* [it was all much the same as it is with us--Translator] and... the smile died before it was born.

Chapter XII

Social Matters

These Indians do not differentiate the seasons of the year as 805 we do, but rather by the several harvests: thus they speak of the season of algarrobo pod harvest, etc.

How could they even begin to divide the year into months or [802] moons if they only count up to four? This very fact guarantees us a priori that they have not busied themselves with establishing the laws of the earth's or sun's movements.

In spite of this it is remarkable that they divide the day up into innumerable portions according to the position of the sun, which takes the place of our hours. They also differentiate between various constellations such as the Pleiades, Venus, the Milky [821] Way, and Centaur.

And yet they do not have a word meaning "year." The Matacos use one, c-lũppe, which means period, and which has the same indeterminate meaning which that word has with us. Instead of "day," they say "sun" (i-qũa-la), and in place of "month,"

"moon" (i-que-lacq). In this they agree with the languages of all M
nations, a thing which is still preserved amongst us in poetic usage, 805
while the common language of prose has undergone such changes with
the passage of time that the words no longer appear to have their
primitive material significance of sun and moon.

Either by analogy from "moon" to "a light" or vice versa, the
fact is that the word for both "moon" and "a light" is the same. M

This is not true of the word for "fire," for to this element C
special properties are attributed as the Chiriguanos condemn the 764
bodies of those who die in the odor, or rather, taste, of evil, to
be burned; and the Tobas and Matacos burn all bodies. This
practice among the two latter nations is to be explained by their
desire to hasten as much as possible the final condition which will
benefit the deceased, that is, that as soon as the fleshy parts are
consumed the soul will be able to descend into the earth and be among
its companions.

[213] Despite the fact that they are innocent of matches and M
sulfur, not to mention steel for striking fire, since they have no 372
flint, they can produce fire at will. I have already described the
manner in which they do this, by twirling one stick rapidly upon
another which is lying on the ground until the sawdust which results
-- which looks like finely powdered roasted coffee grounds --
begins to glow. Then they heap a kind of highly combustible wood
onto it, blow it until a flame appears and from this they can make
as large a fire as they wish. One of the two sticks which they use
is from the chilca bush, which is aromatic, resinous and porous
and is found in abundance throughout the Argentine Republic.

It is customary to say that each Indian does everything for M
himself, and that this is the cause for his slowness and backwardness. 463
But this is not so. They may be wanderers, but they do not
for this reason refrain from a certain distribution of labor. There
are amongst them weapon makers, canoe builders, net makers,
weavers, etc., who sell their manufactured goods to their companions
and receive others in exchange for them. They have, then, M
their guilds of arts and skills, but in an embryonic stage, of course. 192
They also have particular terms to express themselves in this field,
which in Mataco are formed from the word which indicates an object 463
plus a particle indicative of function. Of these particles ʾhi

M indicates "possession" or "deposit"; gúu indicates "make," "maker";
192 kiá is "means," that is that which is used to procure something;
463 for example: "fish" is yacq-set; "fisherman," yacq-set-quiá;
"arrow" is lúték; "arrow maker" lutek-guú; "arrow owner,"
lutek-ʼhi. By virtue of this same particle, the first time they saw
a trunk and a bird cage they called them, and still call them,
imai-hi, that is, "clothes keeper"; huen-tié-hi, that is, "bird
keeper."

M One of the more advanced industries is that of weaving for
286 which, as I have already reported, they do not use a shuttle but
a broad piece of wood about a hand's breadth long with which they
press the wool by hand. Another industry is the making of nets
M which are often as long as fifteen or twenty meters. Of all their
[415] belongings, however, nothing is superior to their bags, which are
elegant and made to be very elastic. According to their contents
these bags can stretch to an extraordinary size without the mesh's
M opening too widely and thus allowing the objects to fall out. They
[531] habitually decorate them with patterns, mostly geometrical ones
such as parallel lines, triangles and squares.

M The canoe making craft deserves special mention. They are
396 made from a single trunk of the large and corklike yuchan tree
which they hollow out roughly and then launch.

M The tools which those savages use are the shells of a kind of
412 large oyster or clam which abounds in the Chaco lakes. They also
use jaguar teeth, hard wood, and the jaws of fish such as the
palometa, with which they shave their heads and the little hair
which grows on their faces.

M [214] Not only are they not ignorant of the ceramic art,
323 but it is in this one art that they most closely approach us in quality.

C Cooking must have contributed much to the discoveries of this
M industry, but Indian piety regarding the dead is what has determined
323 the major advances and relative progress in the art. It is precisely
171 the Matacos, Tobas, Chunupis and others who do not bury their
dead in ceramic vessels who have only rough, unpolished cooking
pots, while the Indians who live in Santiago, and the Chiriguanos
of Bolivia, although they do have small imperfect jars, have
others which are very carefully polished, painted and decorated
with small raised nubs, in the largest and most beautiful of which
they deposit their dead.

482 [415] Those pots which are used to contain water have an indented waistline around which a rope may be passed when they need to be transported. This rope, running around the jar, is slipped over the carrier's forehead and the vessel is carried on his back, to which effect he must bend back and neck forward. This manner of transportation is no where near as graceful as that of carrying jars on the head as our country women do, and rather makes the Indian women look like beasts of burden -- however, it may well be a more hygienic way and is, in any case, more practical when traveling along half choked forest paths.

241 They have no knowledge of, and do not practice, agriculture; yet they do sometimes plant corn (which, as is well known, originated in America) and also pumpkins. When they think it is time to go and eat the crop, they harvest it. They do not grind the corn, but boil it and the pumpkins also while they are yet green -- a harvest, then, is gathered in piece meal and lasts quite a long time. In order to sow they make use of a hard wood spade in the form of a small oar, or a large spear head; the husband makes a hole in the earth, his squaw throws in the seed, covers it, and that is all. The seed is sown in a recently burned off, damp field, that is, one which has just been rained on. 123

609 The crop is owned communally by all, but they are nigardly with it concerning outsiders. While we were on the ship, most of our food having run out, we hungered for fresh provisions and vegetables, for we had been without them for more than three months. When the Indians made us a present of pumpkins and ears of corn we were more than delighted. These Indians were friendly, but later on their friendliness proved false for they killed our interpreter. The sailors managed to discover the location of the pumpkin patch and corn field and raided them by stealth. On the following day, when they returned to the cultivated plots they found that everything had been destroyed and not a single growing plant was left. We were never able to find even one of the Indians.

648 241 It seems, also, that the whites do not want the Indians to take up agriculture. I was told that the white settlers once [215] came upon a number of fields sown by friendly frontier Indians, and destroyed them so completely that the discouraged Indians had never again planted so much as a handbreadth of land. This action

stemmed from the desire which the whites have of keeping the 648
Indians from settling and taking possession (a fact recognized by 241
Argentine law) of the excellent land which the local whites look upon as legitimate prey for the future. 437

They do not indulge in commercial enterprises; and how could they possibly do so when they have no agriculture or industries, being only wanderers and nomads? However, they do practice barter on a small scale, which is their only form of primitive, embryonic commerce. They do not have words for "buying and selling," and in order to express this idea it would seem that they had gone to some of school of economics to learn the exchange formula do ut des; for, strangely enough the Matacos, for example, instead of saying "sell me" say atquiocq niquiocq, which means "give me I give you."

One can gather from this that they have no form of money; 436
but they have invented a word to signify our coins, which is 192
tdócq-kynat among the Matacos and which means hide or skin of metal. Kynat is a generic word which covers all metals which do not exist or circulate in the Chaco. It would appear from this that it is a word invented prior to the appearance of paper money.

Nevertheless there is a sort of medium of exchange, though 386
in only an incipient stage, among the inhabitants of the Chaco. [436]
It is a substance which the Indians use to paint themselves with and which is highly valued by them even in the smallest amounts. In Santa Cruz de la Sierra the plant which produces it is called urucú. This paint is obtained by boiling the fruit of the urucú for twenty-four hours, when the coloring matter floats to the top and is collected and made into small pellets of varying sizes. The dye is exuded from the skin of the fruit, which is about the size of an orange. The fruit with a blackist skin produces a black dye, the one with yellow skin gives an orange or red dye and the fruit having a white skin produces a green dye. The skin on the yellow and white varieties is about as thick as the outer covering on a walnut. Each one of the three grows on a different kind of urucú, all of which are plants which grow to be about as tall as a man, with fruit about the size of a pomegranate which split open of their own accord when they are ripe.

Although this substance is produced and made in Bolivia, 302
it is current among all the Chaco Indians and is used by them to

dye themselves red when they are courting, black when they wish 302 to appear dreadful, and green when celebrating some festivity. These colors come off very easily.

While on the subject of personal adornment, I must say that 304 these Indians, to a greater or lesser degree, are in the habit of 824 tattooing themselves. I have seen this carried to great lengths among some Toba warriors, and especially among the women. It looks something like the scars left by smallpox and is set out in geometric designs. They do it by puncturing the skin with a [216] large thorn coated with a caustic substance which looks like milk and which leaves an indelible mark and remains under the epidermis. This substance is to be found mainly in Bolivia in the region of Santa Cruz, and is called in Guaraní iguoqui. The same name is given to the plant from which it comes which is a vine which produces bunches of white flowers and elongated fruit which break open and expel a sort of dust. In order to obtain iguoqui they cut the bunches before they ripen, and from the stalk there exudes the milky sap used for tattooing. While the operation is in process they keep the portion of stalk submerged in water so that its milky contents will not well out and be lost. A Chiriguano Indian saw one of these vines twenty leagues downstream from the frontier with the whites on the Bermejo River in the place called La Luna Nueva.

A custom very similar in nature to tattooing in its object 302 is the plucking of hair which is a universal activity among the inhabitants of the Chaco and possibly among all the Indians of the New World.

The object of this is to appear better looking, but it is possible that the real cause has something to do with hygiene and comfort.

Maybe they want to set themselves off in this way from the other animals, which are covered with hair.

Meanwhile, either because they are naturally so or because of a gradual natural selection based on their depilatory habit, [142] the fact is that the Indians are almost completely lacking in hair both on the body and face, and the little which does grow they pull out, with very few exceptions.

In spite of their language's being so complete I have been 533 unable to discover canticles or any similar musical effort. All

I was able to come upon among the Matacos was this attempt at 533 a poetic song, sung goodness only knows how, by the squaws. However, in spite of its failings it does reveal the use of rime:

Boníca namboníca [539]
Se-lé-ctié-nó:
Boníca, boníca;
Namboníca, namboníca.

which means: I like, I do not like you to embrace me:
I like, I like, I do not like, I do not like.

They have no dances; those violent gallopings about in a 535 circle holding hands can hardly be called dancing. They are chaste, however, when they do dance, and if men and women happen to be at a dance together each sex forms its own separate circle, one within the other, but without touching. 18

In a word, everything pertaining to the imagination, everything coming under the heading of religion, poetry or dance, can be said to be completely lacking among these savages.

[217]

Chapter XIII

Social Matters (continued)

000

But if they have no imagination are they not also heartless and insensitive? It has repeatedly been said and written that the bonds of kinship are not at all close and easily severed among the Indians; and this "fact" has apparently been picked up not from observation but by analogy based on the absence of the family and the existence of concubinage.

I am afraid that this is going too far. We are accustomed to and molded by our Christian tradition, which, by the way, is an exception to the immense majority of other cultural traditions, an exception which is paid for in part by pretense and infidelity, and the barefaced immorality which is prostitution.

It seems to us that if a woman is not joined to a man by all the sacraments of the church, and if she is not his only wife, then there results a shrivelling in all the finer feelings.

The opposite could well be demonstrated but in order not to stray from these my Indians, let me say that I have seen proof positive of conjugal love among polygamists. 600

We had on board an Indian with his young and beautiful partner, whom he loved and adored as though she were a representation of the Virgin. 152 593

In that business of the Indian who was bitten by a snake and whom we treated, his wife came to him immediately and cared for him for twenty days without ever leaving his side.

Chief Pascual, whose wife was captured and carried off in a surprise raid -- she being old and ugly --, organized an invasion, tracked down the attackers, fought like a lion and rescued his partner from the hands of the enemy. These are facts which happened in a short time while I was present in that area.

When an Indian puts in an appearance and asks for something, he never forgets his children, his wife or his relatives: when he receives anything capable of being divided up, he distributes it, not only to the above but also to his companions.

I have also noticed that mothers are always extraordinarily loving with their children; and have noted that the inter-tribal wars and the mass killings of the inhabitants of a given village are always motivated by the need to avenge offences offered against compatriots or relatives. And if this does not reflect loving concern, what does?

[218] They are cruel, but only regarding prisoners of war 727 whom they condemn to death. We are hardly in a condition to judge them for this cruelty since we did ourselves do the very same until recently; put it into wholesale practice against the Indians themselves during the period of conquest, and continue to do so against them even now when we can do it with impunity.

Among the Indians this custom of killing prisoners is necessary for their personal security in the nomadic life they lead in [569] which they are continually exposed to surprise attacks, and it furthermore frees them from the shame of slavery, an unknown phenomenon amongst them. (1) Looked at from another point 600

1. This does not agree with what is recounted about the Mbayas and other tribes, who, as report has it, have slaves. (Ed.)

Chaco Indians SK4

of view this practice of no quarter for prisoners has far reaching effects upon racial distribution, for the victors, in either pitched battles or in contests of intelligence, take the place of and completely supplant the vanquished, thus carrying out that process of selection, which is basic to the Darwinian theory, and which is behind the gradual betterment of the racial strains in the whole organic kingdom, to which end all struggle for life may be reduced to the expression mors tua vita mea. 000

C 164

It has been said that the American Indians have been avenged of the conquest and of our introduction of smallpox by making a present to the Europeans of venereal disease.

I think that this is one of those assertions which are often made without sufficient proof, and which can easily be disproved. I have been told that qualified researchers have shown that this disease harks back to remote antiquity. Popular opinion (often wrong) has as a matter of course claimed it to be of French origin; and historians, in all seriousness, attribute it to the period in which Charles VIII invaded Italy. Whoever cares to accept this ought first to take a look at Chapter XV in the Book of Leviticus.

Actually, this disease is unknown among the Chaco Indians; or at least this was so until it was introduced by the white invaders. And although this could be explained by saying that a plague tends to disappear or to become attenuated after it has run its course and harvested those who had a predisposition for it -- which is the scientific theory held today by the new school of medicine and which in fact, so it seems to me, jibes with the Darwinian Theory of selection -- the facts are as I have reported them. What is more, in those localities where this disease exists the Indians are quite as prone to fall to it as are others, while African Negros seem either not to catch it or else to get it in a mild form. This is common knowledge among the gauchos of the plains [219] wherever the presence of these two races has made the observation of this fact possible. I set this down here in case it may be of use to those who have not observed it or who are ignorant of it.

M 231

These Indians are nomadic, as we know, and do not have domestic animals. The few they do have have come to them from us, and this exception merely substantiates the rule.

Even at the time of the initial conquest of these lands the white invaders were surprised at the lack of domestic animals among the Indians, and this not in one or two places but over the whole continent, a state of affairs such that it has attracted the attention of historians and philosophers, from Robertson to Humboldt, and from the latter to the most modest of travelers.

In point of fact nomadism has existed and still exists in Asia, nevertheless domestic animals were and are there much in evidence: the horse and the camel, for example. Have not the Lapps, the Samoyeds, and the Chukchee tamed the reindeer? And have the natives of the Kamchatka peninsula not tamed the dogs they hitch to their sleighs?

To what then are we to attribute this indubitable inferiority in the American nomad? Certainly not to the race's lack of ability -- an answer which might arise from a superficial and cursory acquaintance with them -- for if that were so then the Greenlanders ought not to have domestic animals, as the American Eskimo do not, despite being of the same stock and having the bison, similar to our ox and tamable, in their midst in the polar region.

Furthermore, the matter of domesticating animals which are tamable does not present any sort of problem requiring superior capabilities. Actually it cannot be denied that these nomads do have something similar to domestic animals, for the truth is that the Chaco Indians have always had and certainly have now either a tame ostrich [rhea--Translator], or a chuña, or a charata (woods chicken), and we know that the barkless dog was found to be in domesticity among them.

It is my opinion that the lack of domestic animals is due to three special circumstances existing on this continent and among its inhabitants. These circumstances are: physical conditions, social conditions, and the scarcity or complete lack of tamable animals.

It is well known that on this continent, owing to certain quite easily explainable physical causes, it is colder than it is in the old world at the same geographic latitude, which makes the temperate zone here much smaller than over there. For this reason it must have been much more difficult to care and get sufficient fodder for domestic animals up there among the inhabitants of North America where the bison is to be found.

Even had this difficulty not existed, the social organization 231 of the American nomads made the keeping of domesticated animals well nigh impossible. In [220] effect, and in spite of the fact that one nation might occupy an immense area, yet it would be divided into small tribes who owned sway over relatively small territories and were (as their survivors still are) continually at war amongst themselves. It follows from this that there was no security, which is an indispensable condition for the raising of animals and for any other peaceful occupation. Even at the present time the Chaco Indians, although they are acquainted with our domestic animals and do on occasion try to raise them, do not do so on a worthwhile scale because the mere fact of their possessing them is a temptation for their neighbors to invade and despoil them. If social life had somehow got to the point of compelling these Indians to gather into large groupings, then, given the range of their vast territories and despite their being nomadic and continually at war, it would always have been easy for them to protect their animals, when invaded, by fencing them into inclosures.

Can the Indians of these parts have been cannibals? This is 266 a question which always arises when we have dealings with savages like these.

In America cannibalism has had adherents among "Hebrews and Samaritans," among "Barbarians and Christians." The savage Caribs and the cultured Mexicans topped off the very best dishes of their cuisine with human flesh. The peaceful Peruvians used not to disdain stews of human blood for their religious feast days, in which they would knead corn bread with the blood taken from the foreheads of babes -- what pious butchers were the gentle and beautiful women devotees of that nation's religion.

In this region of the Chaco, although cannibalism may have been practiced, temporibus illis, (which cannot be proved), at the present time it is either non-existent or else must be considered reduced to its very lowest terms. 727

I shall say nothing about the custom of drinking aloja from 264 the scalp of a prisoner which has been converted into a propitiating cup of vengeance and victory.

I have seen them drink avidly of the blood of cattle 262
slaughtered for our use, but they do not feed exclusively on cattle 272

blood or on that of other animals as some have reported; rather 262
do they make their principal diet of fish, game, and the roots 272
and fruits of the field with which, together with wild forest honey which is so abundant, they prepare the fermented beverages I have already spoken about.

He who spends any time among the Indians finds cause to 732
marvel at the lack of cripples or maimed people. From this fact certain travelers have gone on to affirm that the Indians, like latter day Spartans, kill off their malformed babies. This is also the opinion of some historians.

[221] I, on the other hand, although confirming the fact of their being no cripples by my own personal observation, explain the phenomenon by attributing it to the physical and social condition in which the Indians live. A more than free life, generally sufficient food (in spite of what may be said to the contrary); the nakedness of the women -- that is, their lack of tight garments about their waists and breasts; the healthful climate (for them at least), all are physical elements conducive to the great rarity of cases of deformity in the body structure of their babies.

Furthermore, the constant state of war, the frequent surprise attacks, the custom of giving no quarter, the wild beasts and reptiles, all conspire against the handicapped who are inferior in the indispensable faculties necessary in the struggle for existence. In addition to this it is probable that malformed children are not accorded the privilege granted their normal peers, that is, that their lives be spared by victorious enemies, and they be carried off to the latters' villages there to be raised as members of the kidnapers' group and thus contribute to its strength and progress.

All this then explains sufficiently the lack of deformed individuals without the need to attribute to the Indians the habit of killing newborn babies or allowing them to die. My personal experience allows me to set down a positive happening which *gives the lie to such a supposition.*

In the very center of the Chaco I came upon a deaf-mute Indian who must have been a little over thirty years of age. Really, if there is any defect which makes a man completely useless and deserving of being eliminated from society, this is it. However, it is true also that it is one of those imperfections which even in the most favorable physical circumstances can occur quite often among children who are the offspring of parents who are too closely consanguineous. Marriages of this type (between close relatives) are not rare here, and -- this is not just an extra trip bearing grist for my mill -- I have been assured that of the very small number of defective persons these latter, the deaf-mute, are the least rare among the Indians of these parts; among whom, let it be said, I have not seen a single cretin or cotudo [coto is a malignant swelling of the throat -- Translator] and that in spite of the fact that aberrants of this type abound in the north and western part of the Republic. 732

To come back to my deaf-mute: The occasion of my meeting him was brought about by his having been attacked by a tiger [jaguar--Translator] which mauled him horribly while he was gathering firewood. (This is one further proof as to the difficulty of putting up a successful struggle for life in these waste places if one is not in the full possession of all one's senses). We were called to treat the poor wretch, but he refused our ministrations energetically, preferring to put himself in the hands of the witch doctors.

Despite what I have stated above, the Indians themselves have assured me that it sometimes [222] happens that a mother will allow her children to die if their father or any other man who will care for them dies or goes away. [847]

However, this must happen only very seldom (and does not weaken our argument regarding the handicapped) for among the inhabitants of a given village and particularly between relatives there exists a truly charming sharing of goods -- yet when food is scarce one may suppose that the phenomenon is more common. But such a state of food scarcity is probably felt less owing to the great variety of foods acceptable to the Indians and their really remarkable adaptability to the availability of food: they can live on a very skimpy diet when need arises, and then gorge themselves with a vengeance when they hit a time of plenty. 261

The elasticity of the stomachs of these savages is truly extraordinary. When not on the march a mouthful of food is enough for them; while fresh air, the exertions of the hunt, of fishing, of harvesting and of traveling in pursuit of these activities 261 147

261 147 or of waging war, coupled with an iron constitution, allows them to stuff themselves like gunny sacks.

261 171 147 A remarkable thing! Be it because of racial relationship, be it rather because of the great similarity in their way of life, the fact is that this same pendulum-like swing between extreme frugality and enormous voracity is also to be found among the gauchos, and all the other inhabitants of the Argentine non-urban areas in general, not excluding other peoples of the earth who live in similar social conditions. So true is it that the same causes produce the same results regardless of where they happen to occur.

554 These Indians are very jealous of their equality. They do not allow others to surpass them and the women are the first to attack any of their companions who, either because of natural gifts or the husband's ability, find themselves approaching a favorable position.

556 123 I cannot forget a bitter disillusion which fell to my lot on one occasion. Tajo, my Mataco language teacher, has a wife who is an extraordinarily beautiful Gypsy type and looks, at a distance, like one of the more beautiful women of Buenos Aires. The husband was very much in love with her and I thought that I could not do less than to make her a present of a few cheap trinkets and garments. The husband added a few more things to my gifts and so the young woman was able to dress herself up in a manner unrivaled in the area.

As soon as she went out to show off her finery before her friends, dressed in her brightly colored clothes, she was received with admiration, but also with cries of protest.

I, who have often been led to sin in the direction of artistic platonism, wished to see the Mataco beauty in her new regalia and felt I had a certain right to [223] demand to be allowed to do so, but I found that it was not possible. The chief had forbidden her to wear her gifts because the other squaws had complained that her luxurious attire detracted from their own value; and so the young matron had been obliged to distribute her clothing among the others and to keep just a few scraps for herself which she would wear only every now and then, and then not openly.

Even among the savages one must adhere to sumptuary laws!

Chapter XIV

Social Conditions (continued)

Can it be true that these Indians wallow, as Gûerrazzi would say, in the baser aspects of love, and that they waste their dynamic and reproductive strength in abusing Venus, as has so often been said and written?

For the traveler who finds himself for the first time in the presence of these daughters of the forest in their natural state, the lack of any veil or covering to hide provocative curves is a strange phenomenon indeed, and he who has been the victim of a prolonged carnal fast may well consider this nude spectacle to be dangerous, even irresistible. But actually it is not and cannot be so in the ordinary state of events.

Habit puts a dampener on this sort of thing and quells the desire or stimulus of the senses which, furthermore, are bereft of the incitement of lustful refinements, unchaste caresses and irresistible flirtations. The senses, furthermore, are not excited by the undulating silk peplum, swinging electrifyingly, or by the tight-fitting buskins which show their wearers off to such good advantage; nor are they provoked by snugly molded waists, or filmy lace which reveals more than it covers, or by the supple glove which completes an elegant toilette, all of which, topped off with some brilliant necklace, awaken the dormant senses and tempt the sons of civilization.

This business of continually having women before one dressed in the manner of the Garden of Eden does not result in lasciviousness, rather it is a fact that the very humility of the savage woman's occupations, together with great freedom, tend to allay the manly appetites and guide them along socially acceptable channels.

Who does not know about the added attractiveness of forbidden fruit? Yet it is this very element which is lacking among these naive children of nature. Furthermore, how can carnal orgies take place in the midst of poverty and simplicity?

[224] Apart from this one must bear in mind that nothing which is destructive of man can be said to have originated in him, or to be permanent with him, for if this were so how could he have come to be and multiplied?

Thus, regarding those vices which are so often attributed 000 to savages, one must suppose that the person who reported them was deluded -- for it often happens that travelers deceive themselves and allow their preconceived notions to color a situation which is so different from the one in which they were brought up -- or else that they are vices introduced by contact with other societies and really foreign to the basic nature of the savages' life.

[At this point, the beginning of the third paragraph on page 224, the text is repeated and continues so up to the end of the first paragraph on page 226. This section is identical to that between page 218, beginning of paragraph three and page 220, end of paragraph one--Translator].

[226, second paragraph] The scarcity of tamable animals has been conducive to the absolute lack of domesticated ones, and this has, in turn, tended to undercut the movement towards larger social groupings. This paucity of domesticated animals is notorious and we have an excellent example of it among the Peruvians who, despite having a well organized religion, government, and agrarian institutions, still had only domesticated, among the larger animals, the llama, which latter, because of its shape and endurance may well be called the camel of the Andes. And the Mexicans too, in spite of being settled and, let it be said, civilized, as were also the Bogotanos, still had no other domestic animals than those which we would call "lesser barnyard animals," such as rabbits and a few fowls -- and this came about because there were no other tamable animals.

It is a fact that even the Peruvians who had domesticated the llama, making use of its meat and wool and using it as a beast of burden, as is still done in Bolivia (1), had to be satisfied with allowing the vicuña, whose wool was then, as now, much sought after, to continue in its wild state because it is an animal

(1) The llama as a pack animal can only carry four "arrobas" [one "arroba" = 25 pounds--Translator], that is 45 kilograms; while a mule is able to carry loads of twelve arrobas, which is 135 kilograms.

which is very hard to tame. They used to hunt the vicuña during 600 certain fixed seasons, a multitude of people gathering together for this purpose by order of the Inca and enclosing in a wide circle a large tract of mountainous countryside. This enclosure was sealed off with a rope hung with strips of cloth and attached to stakes. The Indians would then rush toward the trapped vicuñas and herd them into a small area, the single, puny strand of rope over which they could easily jump being sufficient to hold them. Then the herders would close in ever more tightly until the large numbers of animals were so compactly crowded together, being hemmed in by precipices on one hand and the ropes on the other, that they could be easily captured. This type of vicuña hunt was limited to a different area each year and so extinction of the animal was avoided. The same sort of thing is done nowadays in the Mojo territory and although the limitation to certain regions is not adhered to the animals do not appear to be greatly reduced in number.

This example assures us that if they had had other animals in that area which were amenable to domestication, the Indians would have made use of them; and by analogy it shows us that wherever we find that animals are not domesticated the reason is that no tamable animals, or very few of them, are to be encountered, which is actually, as we know, what has happened.

[227] Be that as it may, it is apparent that the transition of the inhabitants on this continent from a nomadic, savage life to the sedentary life of agriculture must have been abrupt indeed; while in the old world there was, and is still, an intermediate state between the purely nomadic and the agricultural state which is the nomadic combined with the pastoral.

This lack of an intermediate state is to be explained fully enough, it seems to me, by the absence of tamable and, therefore, tamed animals. From this, in my opinion, it would be a mistaken conclusion for anyone, finding himself suddenly in the presence of agricultural nations such as those of Peru, Mexico and Bogota, which are surrounded by other nations still in a savage state, to attempt to explain this anomaly by regarding it as comparable to the type of evolution undergone by Asiatic nations, in which sudden changes were introduced by conquest from without. The fact is rather to be explained by the natural CDD causes already mentioned -- and as far as Peru is concerned, I believe I can state from personal knowledge that the language spoken there, which was the official one in the time of the Incas, is related to the language used by the savages.

If we eliminate this sort of Deus ex maquina, that is, a supposed invasion or immigration of nations from the old continent to the region occupied by the above mentioned tribes, this question is raised: to what causes must one attribute the civilizations of Peru and Mexico? In these countries there could be found institutions which in some cases might be considered as copied from the old continent, such as: the Cult of Stars, Gods, Temples, Priests, Monks, Castes. In Mexico we have a calendar, which Humboldt thought to be similar to the Egyptian; in Cuzco, the capital of Peru, a period of years almost identical to that of the Hebrews; there also the quipu or cord for keeping count (used on occasion in China); a pedagogical [sic] government; periodic distribution of land; a matching up of young people of marriageable age made publicly by the Inca, which reminds us of the pedagogical governments and the agrarian laws over the whole of the old continent; the Hebrew jubilee, the nuptial customs of the Assyrians. . . .

This is a query which every thinking man asks himself but which is not to be answered lightly. Some historians of note say the following: In the regions occupied by these empires there reigns a climate which is benign but also enervating, and the peoples gathered there lent themselves more easily to the discipline involved in leading a civilized life. A conquering man or nation could overcome them and impose a despotic rule, which could be ferociously cruel (as in Mexico), or paternalistic (as in Cuzco), but in any case always frightful. Human intelligence -- and human it is [228] wherever it may be -- developed there in the same manner as in other places, and gave rise to civilizations and situations analagous with those on the old continent.

I do not agree at all with this opinion, especially with the first part. I regret that I am not familiar with the physical conditions of Mexico, but I know the conditions in the greater part of the Inca region and there I have found the natural explanation which the facts yield.

Necessity was the underlying cause in this empire, and not the enervation of its inhabitants.

In all of Peru, on all the western slope of the Andes, on almost all of the eastern slope and in Bolivia, neither man nor any other animal can live without agriculture, which cannot itself exist without irrigation.

Here are two causes which oblige man to give up wandering, come together in groups, and therefore hold himself in check, settle down and develop for himself, successively, arts, discipline, religion, government. Despotism of itself explains nothing, but both warlike and peace-loving nations have had to endire it in the past, endure it now, and will endure it in the future, and yet this in no way makes them inferior to nations who have enjoyed freedom. On the contrary, in the Chaco, in the Pampa, in Brasil and in North America, the soil supplies fruits and roots, quadrupeds and birds freely and spontaneously, while the rivers and lakes contain an abundant supply of fish. This is the reason behind the lack of unity and settling upon the soil: for here are nations who would probably prefer to be destroyed by invaders (whom necessity forced into civilization and the procurement of weapons of offense) rather than willingly submit to the slavery of work which they do not need. And nevertheless, for the greater part these regions have a benign and often enervating climate, more so than in Peru, Bolivia and Mexico.

Now, let us suppose that either because of war or because of the need to expand and spread out (the two most important causes for mass migration) a new race occupied the area of Peru shortly after growing in number beyond the limits imposed by the strictly limited resources of that poverty stricken land. It would, out of very necessity, have to wrest from the soil by dint of hard labor that sustenance which it lacked and which could not be obtained from other more fertile regions because these were inhabited by more numerous, happy and stronger enemies.

This genesis seems so true and obvious to me, that I feel that if the historians had realized what the innate physical conditions of these regions were, they would not have been able to come to any other possible conclusion. I am almost certain that even Mexico cannot boast of such a climate or such a degree of soil fertility as not to require labor of an agricultural type in order to produce enough for the sustenance of its inhabitants.

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[229] The analogies in both institutions and customs which can be drawn between the new and the old continents do not by any means amount to positive proof that such institutions and customs were introduced by invaders from the old world, since such invasions hark back dozens of centuries into the remote past; yet certain details constrain us to refrain from discounting the possibility that certain individuals may have been cast up on these shores by the fury of the ocean, remained here and introduced new influences. It is my opinion that these analogies may well be for the most part the result of natural human intelligence, the harmony and homogeniety of which would thus be clearly manifested across both time and space.

On the other hand, if we overrule the above explanation and prefer to accept a material union -- or even a prehistoric connection prior to all human rememberance -- between the two worlds, then we must of necessity recognize and declare the tremendous inferiority of the Americans.

This inferiority -- supposing it exists -- was either original in the race of mankind which came to settle here or else resulted from the physical conditions of this continent; an inferiority, let it be said, which has been found throughout the animal kingdom in the Americas.

The solution of this most important problem, the major problem facing humanity, is reserved for the physical and natural sciences, and also to the not much loved science of philology.

[Translator's Note - [This "translator's note" is one included in the text by the first translator who rendered the original Italian version into Spanish--Translator]. On sending this translation to Mr. Pelleschi for correction and approval, I asked his pardon for certain omissions which I had made and which appeared in the original text. These omissions had to do with certain matters which had a legitimate place in the author's travel notes but which were not of a nature to be included in a publication such as this.

The author, with characteristic good will, acceded to my petition, but pointed out that the final result was lacking somewhat in continuity. I therefore beg the author's pardon and ask the reader to bear this in mind should he come upon some gap.

As for the rest Mr. Pelleschi and I are in complete accord: 230 neither are all good things to be found in our civilization nor all bad ones among the savages of the forest. God grant that we not fall into the mistake of saying that that civilization which is in contact with the poor Chaco Indians is Christian, except for a few shining exceptions!

One should read what the Dominican Father Domingo de S. Thomas wrote about these things in 1570, in Chapter XXIII of his "Gramática Quichua" ["Quichua Grammar"--Translator].

[230] "Since we Christians came to this land, the Indians have taken up our manner of swearing, and there are even some who think (to their detriment) that to be a good swearer is tantamount to being a good Christian; and it is a fact that the following episode is true, and I can vouch for it as I was directly concerned: I once asked a chief, in a certain province, if he were a Christian, and he answered me that he was not yet fully a Christian but was only beginning to be one. When I asked him what he knew that was Christian he said "I can already swear using God's name, and play a little at cards and I am beginning to be adept at thieving." From which I gathered that that sinner must think that since a tailor is a tailor because of his occupation or actions, which is to sew, and those who pursue other skills are to be recognized by what they do, so also must it be in this matter of being a Christian -- in order to be one one must do what Christians seem naturally to do."

Pilcias, January 1, 1897]

[231] PART TWO

An attempt to compile a grammar of the Mataco tongue.

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I

Origin of this section of the work.

In honor of Juan María Gutiérrez

While we were awaiting the assistance for which we had asked, and which would probably be some time coming, I thought that I could best use all the leisure time which was being forced upon me, by attempting to gather words from the surrounding Indians.

I had heard on repeated occasions that these savages had only an impoverished language with scant words and forms. Because of what I had read (which admittedly was not much) in the field of philology, I was persuaded that the very opposite was probably closer to the truth, and I wished to make some personal observations in order to arrive at a more solid opinion on the subject and then communicate my findings to others. Just before leaving Buenos Aires I had had a conversation with Doctor Juan María Gutiérrez, and he had said the following to me:

"If you have time, take up and study the language of these savages. Because of the complete lack of traditions and of archeological data regarding these Indians, the discipline of linguistics is called to play an important part in the discovery of their origin, or at least of their correlation -- if such exists -- with other peoples in the remote past; remote, that is, when compared with the present known history of man. Apart from this, linguistics is fast becoming a science, and given time will most certainly surprise us with the splendid results which it will achieve in outlining the history of humanity."

To which he added by way of encouragement: [232]

"The field of linguistics is still for the greater part virgin and therefore promises an abundant harvest to anyone who cultivates it -- take advantage of this opportunity, for you will not be wasting your time."

How could I possibly lend a deaf ear to such expert advice? Even though I might not be equipped to contribute more than an insignificant pebble to the linguistic pyramid, I yet felt stimulated by his words, and to a certain extent committed. Later, while I cudgeled my brain in an effort to untangle and isolate some rule from that mass of words which I had been able to collect, I would every now and then be successful and the resultant feeling of delight in accomplishment would be augmented by the anticipation of the further delight which would be mine when I returned to Buenos Aires and presented my findings to Gutiérrez and talked at length with him.

He was a man of great natural talent which had been magnified by deep erudition. Love of the arts and sciences was uppermost in his life. His tolerance was proportional to his vast knowledge and his free way of thinking. He was affable in manner, which was fitting to one who owed everything to his own efforts and who had experienced all of life's vicissitudes. At seventy and in his lofty literary and administrative position he knew how to inspire, even if with just a word, the most modest student, and to listen to and discuss with the most cordial deference the problems of the least of those who visited him, which is not such a common thing among men of his age and knowledge.

But the pleasure of speaking to him again was to be denied me. On my return the news which caught my attention in the first newspaper which I bought after landing was that of his death, which had occurred on the eve of my arrival!

May your memory, oh Gutiérrez, remain ever as alive and lasting in the hearts of your countrymen as it is in the heart of the author of these lines, who will preserve it in all its freshness! Be pleased to accept as dedicated to you, and protect with your name, the few paltry lines which I may write in the following pages on the subject of the Indian languages -- for it is to you that I owe them, and without you as patron I would not have dared to publish them!

II

Beginnings of the work. Particulars of a personal nature.

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At the beginning of my labors I had but little hope of crowning my efforts with any success. We had on board with us an Indian

115 124 who claimed to be a Mataco, [233] and whom I immediately pressed into service by asking him the names of the different garments we were wearing and the objects which surrounded us. But the man would soon tire after I had asked him just a few words. It was evident that intellectual exertions, be they ever so light, were not for him. Whenever I would ask him the same word twice he would give me to understand that he had already told me and, picking up my notebook, would turn the few written pages it contained and find the right one and point out the general area in which the word alluded to was to be found. And yet I could have sworn that he was looking in some other direction while I was writing! When it is mentioned amongst us that someone is "acting the part of an Indian" -- in the sense that he is pretending to be unaware of what is going on -- a very great truth is affirmed.

With all this I was able to advance little or nothing in my work. 124

But when a few days later we were harangued by the Toba chief, who seemed to be barking rather than talking, then I became absolutely convinced that I must keep to my own field of knowledge and not wander innocently into others, so useless did it seem to me even to attempt to make any sense out of those barks.

Man, however, proposes and circumstance disposes. A few days later we ran aground, and as we were unable to continue on our way I had ample spare time at my disposal to make use of as I saw fit. The Indians milled about on the land beside the ship. Many chiefs came to see us and we could not understand a word of what they said to us...here then was my opportunity, and I made ready to take full advantage of it.

115 124 The Indian is distrustful by nature and does not want outsiders to learn his language; but among them was one Faustino, a Christian [Text unclear as to whether this man was a "Christian Indian" who had given up his religion and returned to his own people, or a "Christian white" who had taken up with the Indians -- Translator.] who had gone over to them, and I, by stealth and without the Indians' knowing it, began to question him. However, I did not find this at all satisfactory, finding so much apparent

confusion in the words when they were strung into sentences and 115 attributing the difficulty to Faustino's little understanding of the 124 matter in hand. At last we were able to establish more friendly relations with the Indians by dint of our frank and open treatment, my continual and almost reverential repetition of their words as though they were precious things whenever an opportunity offered and, finally by the judicious distribution of a few gifts all of which, in combination, made them lose their wariness, especially in the case of the younger ones who then outdid themselves in telling me, of their own volition, the name of every object I cared to ask about.

But it was really strange: a word, when repeated, would 124 change and be different for no apparent reason. At times its vowel sounds would seem separate, at others dipthonged, to the extent that if one of the two component sounds were stressed more than the other, neither one would agree. Often the change was in the syllable itself, so to speak, while on occasion there would be either a gain or a loss of a syllable. [Original version garbled--Translator] [115]

One morning we made a test with Natalio Roldán. We spent a quarter of an hour establishing between us which was the true [234] sound which was to be reproduced with Spanish signs, and whether it was this sound or some other which had come through in a given word. This vagueness and lack of certainty confirmed Roldán in his opinion that the Mataco language was an enigma which could not be transcribed, was devoid of rules, and could not be learned, as the Missionary Fathers (who were established in Christian territory near the frontier) themselves had affirmed.

My ear, however, becoming accustomed to these new sounds, brought me slowly to the realization that the Mataco tongue was not after all that wild, untamable mustang which people would have one believe. This I realized while only as yet being able to isolate the sounds, for I could not at that time comprehend the reasons behind certain syllabic changes.

I decided to take a new tack and avoid all pretentious arguments on the subject, channelling my efforts into accumulating sentences, examining and comparing them later in order to be

able to extract a few rules from them after having written them 124
down as it seemed to me that they sounded.

One day the son of a chief stopped by and I began to ask 124
him the names of all the parts of his body. Naked as he was there 193
was no possibility of confusing these parts of the body with the clothing associated with them.

Hardly had he finished when I perceived that each one of those fifteen or twenty words began, without exception, with nu or no, the u and the o substituting each other frequently, the difference in sound being hardly perceptible.

"Well I'll be. . . !" I said to myself. This nu is either an article or a relating particle, for it is not conceivable that so many words have the same root. It didn't seem likely to me that it was an article, but nevertheless I remembered that when I was a boy and I was asked by someone to name the parts of my face I used to answer using the article, and saying -- for example: "the mouth, the eye," etc. Why could these Indians not be just as childish as I?

I very soon had my doubts resolved. I asked him the same questions with reference to my own body, and he repeated the words he had given me, but changing the nu to a, and sometimes a few of the other letters which followed after the nu. It was as though a bolt of lightning had suddenly illumined my understanding -- but doubt returning, and being very desirous to get to the bottom of this problem, I took advantage of the occasion of my having caught a chimango [kite-like bird--Translator] and asked the same questions about the various parts of its body. In the answers I was given, many of the words began with lu or lo, but remained otherwise pretty much the same as those pertaining to man, minus that famous nu or a.

The following conclusion, almost concrete and tangible in 193
its clarity, flashed before me: So the Matacos prefix a variable particle to their radical words, and this particle probably expresses a relationship. But what relationship?. . .I searched again through my notes, especially among the phrases and sentences and found that on every occasion when reference was made to the person who was talking the term began [235] with nu; if reference was to the person spoken to, with a, and if to a third person, then with lu or lo.

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It was a revelation to me. It was a key which opened up for me the secret of a large stage upon which were to be found the explanations of the meaning of a great number of words; it was the compass which allowed me to find the right way as I traversed the labyrinth of phrases.

What a pleasurable experience that was!

These particles are not prefixed only to nouns, but also to verbs, and to adjectives when need arises. They even go so far as to overuse them pleonastically, as we so often do with certain particles in relaxed conversation; a phenomenon which is even more pronounced in untutored usage.

Following hard upon this discovery and attempting to find out something further regarding the way these particles were used, I came upon something which confirmed my previous induction: nu is a syncopation of nuj-ca, which means "mine"; a is a syncopation of aj-ca, meaning "yours"; and lu is a shortened form of luj-co, meaning "his," "of him." This is when these particles are prefixed to nouns. When prefixed to verbs they may be considered, respectively, as syncopations of noj-c-lam, signifying "I"' am or ham, meaning "you"; and lutzi or toj-lutzi, meaning "he" or "that one." With verbs, toj is preferred to lu, and means "this one" when isolated, while toj-sam and toj-lani mean "that one," and toj-licne and toj-lei-tzi mean "that one yonder."

Is this inter-compatibility between personal pronoun, personal adjective and particle indicating personal relation not beautiful and at the same time simple and useful?

Was it possible that such a language could have lacked rules? All this built up my interest and egged me on to further efforts.

Accustomed as we are in our language to find, as a general rule, the root and the unchangeable part of words at the beginning, the finding of the very opposite here was enough to drive one mad until some canon could be found which would explain matters. This being so, the following rule of thumb ought always to be followed when attempting to study a language which does not have a written grammar: forget every rule which holds for one's own language -- if this is not done it will be as difficult to hit upon the right solution as it is to recognize a person who is wearing a mask.

III

Phonology

a. Confusion between K. I. Ch, etc.

Among the Matacos sound shifts such as the following are very frequent: *quia*, *quie*, *quii*, *quio*, *quiu* to *tzá*, *tzé*, *tzí*, *tzó*, *tzú* and to *chiá*, *chié*, *chií*, [236] *chió*, *chiú*, and vice versa. Also *quiá*, etc. to *tiá*, *tié*, etc. So it is that we can use any one of the following words for "sheep": *tzonataj*, *quionataj*, *chionataj*, and either *huenquié* or *huentié* for "little bird." However, the general use of one of these sounds in preference to another marks off one dialect from another. So it is that the Matacos who live adjacent to the Tobas use *tzá*, *tzé*, etc. while those who live near the white settled area use *chiá*, *chié*, and so forth.

This linguistic wanderings, may we call them so, are easily understood if one takes great care and if they concern polysyllabic or even bisyllabic words, but when they are found in conjunction with words of only one syllable they are extraordinarily confusing. For example: who could have guessed that *tzac-da* in one dialect was the same as *quiaj* or *quioj* in another?

Withal, it is no less strange and curious than certain phonetic shifts which are instinctive, if we may use this term, with man in general, and which are to be found also amongst us Europeans. For example, in Milan they say *chiesa* and not *quiesa*, and the Spaniards say *cuchara* instead of *cuquiara* or *cuquiaya* as in Italian, and so with many other words; *squiachare* and *stiachare* (1) to squash. So it is that of the Indians of Quichua leanings, those living in the areas surrounding Santiago often use *na* while the Collas or inhabitants of Bolivia use *na*. Example: *na* instead of *ña*, meaning "already," and *nojca* for *ñojca* meaning "I." The same thing occurs in Italian, in Portuguese and in Spanish, for

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1. In Italian these words are written *schiacciare* and *stiacciare*.

example: *nina* for *niña* and *farina* instead of *fariña*, and so forth.

And what shall we say of the inversion of letters and syllables? How often does it not happen that on speaking rapidly a word becomes changed because of a change in the order of syllables? Now this is a real instinct which is inherent in language generally, which results in certain sounds in one tongue sounding wrong to a person speaking another sister tongue. Thus the Italian *cantilena* reappears as *cantinela* in Spanish, and also *guirlanda* as *guirnalda*, and *birbone* as *bribon* -- the *vir bonus* (!) of Latin, and so forth.

And these Matacos also on occasion interchange the order of syllables in their words, for instance: in their way of speaking *melon* becomes *nelom*, and so also with other words.

b. Confusion of L and R, etc.

It is to be noted that one of the characteristics of this language is the absolute lack of words having the sound of the Spanish *r*, which is a letter which they find quite unpronounceable, except with great effort on their part, and even then it is not pronounced correctly.

Their neighbors, however, that is the Tobas, Chulupís, and [237] Chiriguanos, do have an *r* sound. The Mocovitas serve as a sort of connecting link between the two and pronounce *r* in the French manner, that is, in their throats something like *gr*.

It may seem to many that the sound of the French *r* is more rather than less pronounced than the Spanish *r*, but I am of a contrary opinion, and base my affirmation on what I have observed among the Matacos, for whom it is easier to say *Pegro* than *Pero*, and *Peilo* than *Pegro*. Anyway, the fact that *r* can be pronounced (even though imperfectly) by the Matacos reveals that the lack of the sound *r* in the language of these Indians is not due to an organic defect in the speech apparatus but rather to convention or to the tongue's tendencies. Their not having practiced this sound for centuries on end combined with the action of physiological heredity may have been the cause of their having partially lost the ability to trill their *r*'s as the Spanish do and, with the passage of time, this may result in their losing the ability to do so completely.

And yet it may just be that the whole difficulty is merely an aural one, the ear being unaccustomed to the new sound and, while striving to reproduce it, falling short of the mark because of the already settled habits of the mouth organs -- anyone of us who has attempted to learn one of the ever so many foreign languages has experienced the same thing.

c. The letter "D" and its variations

Neither can they pronounce the *d* clearly, although there are words which have sounds that come close to it, but always in the combination *td* and *th* and pronounced almost as the English do at the beginning of a word in which there is a pronounced occlusion. Examples: "How?" - *tdé hoté*; "he eats" - *theucque*; "marksman" [in Spanish *tirador* --Translator] - *thilalol.*

d. B, D, F, G, P, T, joined to the semivowel L.

I have yet to hear, from a Mataco, the pronunciation of *b*, *d*, *f*, *g*, *p*, *t*, jointed to an *l* or an *r*. This brings about those great changes in acquired Spanish words which render them almost unintelligible, as for example: *ccailá* instead of *cabra*; *Pailó* instead of *Pablo*; *hléno* instead of *freno*; and *hueiló* instead of *pueblo.* And here is another peculiarity: a labial which makes up a single syllable with *ua*, *ue*, *ui*, *uo*, *uu*, they cannot pronounce, and in its stead they use an aspirated *h* voiced softly. This defect or degeneration of sounds is also to be met up with often among the country people in this Republic[Argentina--Translator]. So that they sometimes say *güeno* instead of *bueno*, and *juego* instead *fuego.*

While on this subject of the articulation of these sounds it is remarkable how they agree with the pronunciation of my teacher of the Chinese language, an extremely intelligent cook called Ayaó who can write in his own tongue. The Chinese, apart from lacking the *r*, as is notorious [238], cannot pronounce those same combinations of letters which the Matacos find impossible to manage, nor can they pronounce the *d*, among many others. So it is that it often seems to men when I converse with Ayaõ, that I am talking to a Mataco, there being also certain common physical traits such as skin color, slanted eyes, coarse straight hair, and flattened nose. When he attempts to say *adiós* he says *alio*; instead of *tres* he says *tles*; instead of *propio*, *lopio*; instead of *señora*, *señola*; instead of *teatro*, *teetelo*. It is often almost impossible to guess the Spanish word which he is trying to copy, as, for instance, when he says *teetelo* for *teatro*; *ollejaio* for *ovejas*; *lialio* for *diario*; *poole* for *pobre*; *huelo-lía* for *buen día* and *huela-loche* for *buena noche*.

And, since we are talking about the subject, I must make note of the fact that I have been impressed that these Chinese have a large number of words ending in *lo*. It is also worth mentioning, or so it seems to me, the manner in which the *l* takes the place of *r* and also, in a general way, of the other sound combinations which they find difficult to reproduce. Regarding the *r* among the Chinese, I must confess that I have a word, among the two hundred collected, in which there is an *r*; it may be, however, that the position occupied by this letter contributes to facilitating its pronunciation, as happens with *d* among the Matacos. The word to which I refer is *tai-hi-ró*, *teatro*, in which the *h* is pronounced in such a way that it takes away much of the energy and forcefulness of the *r*. Can it be foreign? This language sacrifices a great deal to auphony and therefore has, where two vowels meet, more apostrophes than do French or Italian, for instance: *nam-nu-am* (meaning "not I") slides its syllables to such a degree that only one consonant and one re-enforced vowel are left. This gives rise to certain consonant groupings in which each consonant must be pronounced and given its due weight, as for example in *atplei* which must be pronounced *at-pe-léi*, almost *átt-(e)-p-(e)-lei*, and means "What is your name?" In this phenomenon there is a parallel with the common usage of French slang and with the English auxiliary verbs "do," "will," "shall," and so forth, when used in relaxed conversation. There are also duplicated consonants, even at the end of words, such as in *yelatass*, "horses." For this reason one must be cautious and weigh carefully each element contained in a word or a phrase, and not gloss over them carelessly. At the least expected moment we see it reappear with all its train of syllables. These differences are of special importance in the oratorical art of these Indians. Mention must also be made, however, of the fact that word endings such as *j* and *que* are often suppressed and lost, their place being filled by placing an extra stress on the preceding letter. Example: *yelatá* for *yelatáj*, meaning "horse"; *ndto’c* for *ndtó-cque*, meaning "much." Furthermore, the position of accents varies in accord with the position of the word in a sentence. For example: *asado*["roast," *barbicue*--Translator] is *pú-cuè*, while "put on the roast" is *ph’o a-pú-cue*. These muted endings mentioned above reveal themselves when followed by another word or when the speaker wishes to pronounce the word carefully. The same thing occurs as happened to the French *doncque* (*dunque*) and *avecque*.

[239] e. Vowels and diphthongs.

In the study of these languages, if we use our five vowels in order to reproduce the Mataco sounds, we will find that we will inevitably have to use diphthongs. By diphthong I mean the union of two or more vowels which are to be pronounced simultaneously and in such a way as to reproduce that complex sound of the diphthong which includes all the component vowel sounds. These would be natural diphthongs which, if one could visualize them fixed in writing, would later give rise, because of the inevitable alternations in pronunciation, to conventional diphthongs such as the French *ou*, the Latin *ae* and *oe*, and the German *eu*. Therefore, I hold that in a written language all diphthongs are to be considered as symbols of a previous and different phonetic expression.

In studies of this sort it is obvious that the alphabet of any one language is quite insufficient, each language requiring an alphabet of its own -- unless one were willing to adopt a whole string of letters longer than a litany. We must add that our alphabet (the Italian) is really one of the poorer ones, particularly because of the lack of a gutteral sign and a sign signifying aspiration, two sounds which are very common in a large number of the world's languages. And our alphabet would be even poorer were it not that it has been artificially enriched from outside by the addition of the letter k, which does not belong to us.

f. Sounds foreign to the Spanish phonetic system.

If we are to transcribe the Mataco language using the letters of our alphabet (the Italian), we must modify it in the following way which will, in a general and loose way, serve to transcribe many other languages: Addition of the German ch, (the German j would also be useful but it would be too easily confused with the Italian j which has the sound of i) an aspirated h as in certain French words; a sign to express the prolongation of a vowel sound (not its reduplication) for which the same h might do (as is the custom in German and which, in my opinion, goes hand in hand with the physical fact of the pronunciation of h); an English th, but having a quality somewhere between t and d, thus becoming a sort of consonant diphthong; an ou diphthong, not having the sound of the French u but spoken in such a way as to pronounce both vowels extremely quickly. The diphthongs b́éú or éú are pronounced as has already been said; an aspirated nasal h, which I indicate with a comma on the upper left side, in order to be able to differentiate it, and a liquid l which is very similar to il. Vice versa, we must abolish certain letters from our alphabet, such as r, d, f, v, and only use b in combination with p, which latter is also to be used only with b and with a special sound the pronunciation of which can be [240] approximated with a final h, thus forming what might be called the diphthong p-h, the p ending with a breathy explosion.

In this way, and without the introduction of strange new characters which are never easily retained in the memory and which one would have had to know beforehand, I have transcribed my Mataco, my Guaraní, my Quichua, my Mocoví, my Chulupí, my Toba and my Chinese, with the Spanish phonetic system in my notes and with the Italian system in my books, to which latter end I substituted ch for j and i for y.

These signs are fairly well known so that we, (that is, the reader and I) who are not experts in the field of linguistics can read the words without any great pronunciation difference, thus satisfying the requirements of the inquisitive, if not those of the scientist (1).

1. In this translation, as is the case in dictionaries, the Spanish alphabet has been used for the reproduction of Indian words. J.P.

A nasal intonation runs through the whole of this language. There is hardly an occasion when h, j and q at the beginning of a syllable is not pronounced nasally -- the exception being when the final consonants of the preceding syllable is lost. I have come upon this phenomenon in all the South American languages with which I have had anything to do, but in none has it been so marked as among the Matacos. It may be because I know the other languages even less than I do this one. It is to this tendency that I attribute the shift from the Spanish ending ando to the Indian anno -- for example: tomando changes to tomanno -- our European languages have not escaped this change unscathed, witness the two letters m and n of our alphabet, the sonorous en and em of French, and the strangely comic way in which everybody pronounces words of endearment addressed to little children.

Another characteristic of this language is the apparent arbitrariness of its sounds. The reader will readily be able to appreciate this by just leafing through the dictionary: there seems hardly a time when the same word is pronounced in the same way, even when spoken by the same person, and this is even worse when it forms part of a sentence. It is truly enough to drive one to despair (!) and would lead to who knows what comparisons of inferiority but that, fortunately for the Matacos, there is a complete vindication and absolute proof to the contrary in that most glorious, polyphonic, word-rich (and in this sense -- that is of arbitrariness of sounds -- similar) language: English!

Chapter IV

Of words and the manner of their formation

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It is interesting and amusing to see the way in which these people form words to designate an object new to them. Observation is the supreme teacher.

[241] For example, their name for "small bell" is *quíu-hút-tzét*, meaning "spider belly" [no pun or connection in Spanish--Translator]; a rifle they call as our forefathers did, that is, *arquebuse*, that is, "fire bow" - *itoj-letzej* derived from *itoj*, "fire" and *letzej*, "bow"; they call "shot" "little bullets," as do the Italians, that is: *c-lóquass*, from *c-lo* meaning bullet and *quassʾ* which is a plural dimunutive ending. A piece of steel for striking fire with a flint, which they had never seen before (as was true also for all the things mentioned above) they call *itoj-cquia*, that is, "remedy or instrument of fire," while the flint itself they called *ten-thé* or stone; the wick they call *itoj-léss* from *less* meaning "sheaf," "bundle," "group," "family"; the cartridge shell they call *c-lo-ʾhi* from *c-lo* meaning bullet and *ʾhi*, a particle which signifies "container" or "possession"; a mirror is *tope-yaj-hi*, *tope-yaj* meaning "image," "shadow"; a sock is *ecolo-búth*, which is derived from *ecoló*, "foot" and *bhút*, "covering." On the other hand shoe is to them *nissót* or *sót*, which proves that they already had knowledge of it, for they may on occasion use a kind of sandal such as that worn by the country people and called *usutas*. They make them from a piece of hide which serves as sole and two thongs which go between the large and second toe and are tied above the ankle. Matches [*fósforos* in Spanish--Translator] they call as we do *ítossass*, a contraction of *itoj-quuass*, which means "little fires"; and a match box is *itoj-hi-huass*, that is, "keeper of little fires."

A word which has always intrigued me and whetted my curiosity regarding its etymology is *yúccúas* which means tobacco, a product which was not known before in the Chaco. I think that I am not mistaken when I derive it from *yu* or *iú*, meaning "burned" and *cúas*, which means "to chew," "break up," "grind." As coincidence will have it, in these two activities both the use and the end result of the use of tobacco are involved. Furthermore, when an Indian says "give me some burned to chew" is he not saying pretty much what we do when we ask "give me something to smoke" [*dame con que fumar* in Spanish means literally "give me that with which to smoke"--Translator], that is, something to make smoke with?

Another analogy in expression of thought -- in addition to those resulting from words in detail and from many other elements -- is to be found in the use of *téi* to designate eyes and face, similar to the poetic use amongst us present-day Italians of *víso* for face, from the Latin *visus*, which means "sight."

A door they call *hlappé bhut* or "door-opening coverer"; and in this I believe that they are more exact than we who lack a term as clear and precise as is this.

They use the same word *huoléi* for wool, hair [*cabello* in Spanish is limited to "hair on the scalp"--Translator] and "hair" [*pelo*, that is, hair on any part of face or body other than scalp--Translator], but precede it with a name qualifying the respective object. We do the same thing but it passes unperceived when we say *cabello* to signify the hair of the scalp via a syncopation which puts its etymology on the wrong track. We have a great many such misleading word shifts in our language, and the Matacos have even more [242] which makes it even more difficult to keep tabs on them.

They use the same word *huoléi* for the leaves of trees, thus giving one to understand that for them leaves are the hair of trees. And really they come close in this to the actual physical facts for the trees which predominate in the Chaco are of the minosa family and have leaves which are complexly and minutely subdivided, thus giving rise to the botanical term "pinnate" and "bipinnate" which are terms that justify the Mataco name which is in such close agreement with the meaning of the scientific term pinnate [from the Latin *pinna* meaning feather--Translator].

It is worthwhile mentioning the way in which they distinguish between the tree and its fruit -- this is done by means of an inflection; for example: the mistol tree is *Oʾhó-yucqué*, its fruit is *oʾhóyaque*; the vinal tree is *attécque*, its fruit *attáje*; the black algarrobo tree is *uossot-etzúje*, its fruit *uossot-etzáje*, and so forth.

One notices here the constant change of *u* to *a*. We do nothing different when we call the pear tree *pero* and its fruit *pera*, the apple tree *manzano* and its fruit *manzana*, and so forth. This does not mean that there are not other ways of naming these things.

The names used for human family relationships change with the sex of the person involved. Need this startle us who have "mother" and "father," yerno [son-in-law--Translator] and nuera [daughter-in-law--Translator] which might more practically have been yemo, yema. It is strange that all languages seem to run along the same lines, the American ones being no exception. What is more, these latter not only make a distinction between the sex of the relative who is referred to but also between that of the person speaking. For example: in Araucano the father refers to his son as fotún and to his daughter as ñahue, while the mother calls her son coñi huenthú, coñi being the general term for "child" in the mother's terminology. In Quichua the father calls his son churi and his daughter ususí, while the mother uses the term huahua.

In the Chinese language, according to my interpreter Ayao, whom I hired not long ago for two francs an hour, son is Tsaé, and daughter, Pnoé; father is Lu-tao; mother Loúmuú; brother, Ghoó-séí-loú; and sister, Ttaí-tzt-é.

In Mataco we have the following names: father, quía; mother, ccó; son, locsé or lotsé; daughter, lectzá; brother-in-law, quayenécque; sister-in-law, ticquíé; brother, lecquiilá or cjculá; sister, cjinno; uncle, uitoc; aunt, uidóje; nephew, lec-jíe-íos (probably a combination of son and brother); niece, cjíaió; father-in-law, quióti; mother-in-law catelá; cousin, huac-lá. I find that the terms for son-in-law and daughter-in-law are the same as those used for brother-in-law and sister-in-law, and the term for brother-in-law is also used for son-in-law, which leads me to believe that I made a mistake in my notes.

The various words used to designate the same degree of [243] relationship, according to whether it be male or female must be attributed, in my opinion, to the agglutinative system adopted in the beginning in order to determine it, but whose etymological genesis subsequent alterations have caused to become lost. The fact is clear that for a married couple a nephew, for example, must be, for one of them, the son of a sister or brother, and for the other of a brother-in-law or sister-in-law.

If we draw together into a lump the words which express these diverse relationships, we shall find that the same degree of

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family relationship, let us say, for example, a nephew, has four 601
different names.

An equally interesting form is that used for the demonstrative pronouns, which is similar to French usage for it is composed of the pronoun *toj* meaning "this one" (corresponding to the French *ce*) and certain particles of location such as *licné* for "that one over there"; *letti* or *lani* for "that one"; and others, among which are *tzi* for "this one." This *tzi* is equivalent to *chi* and to *quii* and is interesting because we come upon it again in the Araucanian language. These demonstrative pronouns also have an adjectival use, and when so employed, become separated, the *toj* part being prefixed to the noun and the *licné*, *tzi* etc. being suffixed, these latter can then not be declined, but the former (that is, *toj*) is declined. Now then, does not the same thing happen with French demonstratives? For instance with *ceci* and *cela*, which in the plural form are *ceux-ci*, *ceux-la*, and become separated when applied to some other term. 192 196

And do such similarities in form not reveal a great harmony in human intelligence, the same linguistic recourses being used to express a like order of ideas in spite of the distance which separates the different races?

The following derivation deserves special mention because it is revealing of a whole order of ideas: "No" is *ka*, "nothing" is *kiá*, "nobody" is *kiái*; the three words keep to the same root, and in a way which is clearer and more logical than our corresponding words. Likewise we have *tde* meaning "no" and *that* meaning "nothing," these two terms used always at the end of a word or phrase.

Tell me now, what more elegant and more compactly logical does philology have to show than the manner in which the Matacos express possessing, containing, executing, or exercising a skill? The letter *h* (when it has an apostrophe it is to be pronounced nasally) shows up in many words, not to say all, which express possession or capacity. Now *hi* and *huu* express that which contains, he who possesses, and he who does something; *huet* means "house," "the place in which." For example: "fish" is *yácsét*, "fish pond" is *yácsétte-hi*; "shoes" are *hissóhéss*, "seller of shoes" is *nissohésse-hi*, "maker of shoes" is *nissohésse-huu*, and "shoe shop" is *nissohésse-huet*. And in all analogous cases they use the same constructions. In what way can it be said that they are behind other languages? 192 196

[244] Thus for Venus they employ the same verbal image as we and the Latins do, that is lucero ["morning star"--Translator] ijuála-hu, "mother of the day"; similarly they call the wrist "mother of the hand," tcué-huo; the abispa tic-lan [Enigmatic. The closest I can get to any logical meaning is "the tic-lan wasp," which is not helpful at all--Translator] they call "mother of the tic-lan, tic-lán-huu; and the beating of the pulse is "little heart," tdul-lecuáj.

The Mataco language may be lacking in certain particular sounds (articulations) but, on the other hand, it has a superfluity of other particular sounds (articulations). Among these latter the following stand out: quiá, quié, quií, quió, quiú, and cquiá, and so forth, which together with others of similar sound are so frequent as to leave one in some doubt as to whether the language is not made up of the same syllable repeated a thousand times over in the same sense. We know already that quiá, quié etc. can change places with tzá, tzé and so forth, or with chiá, chíé, etc., or with tchíá, tchié, etc. Furthermore the inversion of the constituent elements of a word is frequent, for example: "wide" is quü-tzaj-hu and also i-tzaj-quié -- it can therefore be readily understood to what extent Indian oratory can spread itself out and expand, as far as form goes, without really saying anything different. This sort of thing must be very generalized. General Mansilla in his outstanding book Una expedicíon a los Indios Ranqueles ["An expedition to the Ranquel Indians"--Translator] tells of having experienced this Indian fondness for repetitiveness, and I did also among the Tobas when we were harangued for half an hour and were really only told the same thing in several different ways according to Faustino the interpreter. 195

In their formation of compound words they follow the English and German usage: for example: "gloves," which are handschuhe in German, that is "hand shoes," are cqüéí-pbut among the Indians, that is "hand coverers." The same thing happens in negative sentences; example: "I do not see," is Ich sehe nicht in German and nu-ihenni-tde in Mataco, that is, "I see not," which is also precisely the manner of expression of the inhabitants of the areas surrounding Milan. 192 193

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They have general terms which represent certain abstractions such as "bird," "fish," "tree," and also particular ones with which they differentiate between particular species. What is more they even have abstract nouns, for in addition to such words as "never," "always," they have others, "fear" for instance, which they call uái, a word which also means "tremor" or "trembling." For earthquake they say hunat uái, which means "earth tremble" just as in Spanish one says "tremor of the earth." Can it be therefore that for the Matacos to fear is to tremble? Is it not in this way, taking the part for the whole, that our own abstract terms came into being in the great majority of cases? Now trembling is one, the commonest, of the many outward manifestations of fear.

I affirm that these Indians are in full possession of the human 151 intellectual faculties and ability to judge rationally, and these developed to such a degree that they can be considered our equals both in their way of reasoning and in their antiquity. The gap which exists between them and us is one which exists only in the actual world of facts and of the ideas which refer to [245] those facts -- a gap which is in no way proportional to that which exists between their intellectual faculties and ours. And this is easily understood. 000

How many years have gone by, how many were and how many are the individuals amongst us who have taken full advantage of the intellectual benefits of science, ethics and higher education generally? Very small in number are they if we take into account the historical antiquity of man and the number of men who have lived. The effects, therefore, of human psysiological traits must have changed the common heritage of humanity in the whole world during the period of its limited civilizations very little, if at all.

The fact of not having reflected on this phenomenon is the cause behind the ignorant persons's astonishment at being confronted with the advanced conditions and relative progress to be found amongst savage peoples.

The short intellectual and moral distance which separates them from us is an eloquent testimony to the hoary antiquity of man, dating back to the separation of man from his pre-human ancestors, which dwarfs into insignificance the few years which separate us from a state of savagery akin to that in which these Indians live.

Chapter V

Augmentatives and Diminutives

Another thing which almost drove me to insanity was the nomenclature of the domestic animals which were introduced to America from Europe at the time of the discovery or conquest. 192 193

It is well known that when new things are introduced into previously unopened areas the names of these things are also introduced. It is also known that this fact has been of inestimable value, not only to philologists but also to ethnographers, that is, to those who deal with and study the distribution and description of the earth's peoples.

Very well then, -- it would happen that when I asked for the local names for horse, cow, sheep, etc., the Indians would answer with names which were absolutely different from the Spanish names.

Even now I get an urge to laugh when I remember the tortures to which I submitted the Mataco words in order to try to boil them down, by dint of hypothetical changes and shifts, to their Spanish roots.

I was fortunate enough one day to catch two pigeons in a trap.

We had on board with us a beautiful bulldog. In Mataco the word for dog is sinój, and we had named our dog Palomo ["pigeon"--Translator], which the Matacos [246] literally translated into their own language as ucquinataj. One day it happened that an Indian, on patting the dog, said, by way of expressing his admiration: Sinoj-táj! instead of Sinoj or Ucquinatáj. I started then to realize that the particle taj expressed size of superiority, that it was a loose or floating affix, and that it could be added to or taken from other words in order to modify their meaning. I flew to my note books, leafed through the pages, ran through my lists of nouns, added taj to those which did not have it, and in an instant there sprang up before my eyes, to my immense satisfaction, the true, beautiful, philosophic, scientific etymologies of my quiuuasse-táj, "cow"; yelatáj, horse; chíonataj, "sheep"; quiuasset, "deer"; yeláj, "tapir"; chionaj, "doe" -- with the famous taj which enlarges, ennobles and stretches them and declares them to be superior.

So it was that it suddenly dawned on me that in those words, which I had jotted down in their scores, and which ended in taj, I must eliminate that syllable, as also the famous uu or a or la, and tune my ear and sharpen my eye for the sounds which were basic and essential to each word. At the same time that I started to see this more clearly, I began to discover the genesis and the laws governing the word changes.

From there on a new region began to open up for me into which I readily and happily entered.

I hope that the reader will not become scandalized at this sort of enthusiasm which he may perceive in me. In my position he might well have experienced the same thing, for man is a slave to circumstances -- any Minister of State who becomes for a while a private soldier will take pleasure in noticing the look of approval from his corporal for a well executed "present arms"; as will the philosopher when praised by his lady for having helped her to untangle her skein of wool.

So how could a nobody such as I not feel pleasure on seeing, in his own hands, so to speak, a language which had been considered impoverished and of no account, take shape and flower into a methodical and elegant tongue?

Well,anyway -- these Matacos have an augmentative particle: taj, which is used to indicate physical, "moral" and descriptive qualities. So from icnú, man, they form ícnú-taj, large man, from inót, "water," they form inót-táj "fire water" or brandy, and from ahló, pole or rod, they form ahlotáj-yacaré, "almost pole" or "nearly pole."

As a diminutive they sometimes use the particle quuáj and quiáj; for example: from coló, foot, they derive coló-quuáj, little foot; from cuéi, hand, they make cuéi-quiáj, little hand. They also use this latter term to indicate a person who is either lacking a hand -- or the whole arm -- or has a severe malformation in it. [The word "manco" in Spanish means any one of these--Translator.] So a chief called Manco in Spanish -- he actually lacked a hand -- was called in Mataco Cuéi-quuáj. This diminutive particle is also added to pronouns, a thing which cannot be done in Italian but can in Spanish, to wit: esa - esita ["That (feminine) one" -- "that little (feminine) one"--Translator] --which is very frequently used by country people.

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These suffixes taj and quuaj and quiaj, although they are well defined particles, may nevertheless, and probably ought to, be considered as [247] inflections, for they mean nothing by themselves and furthermore it is they which are declined and not the words to which they are attached (1). And it is worth noting that in the matter of declension they follow a rule quite contrary to the one used for the suffixes corresponding to demonstrative pronouns; the same phenomenon which is encountered in French and Italian diminutives. Taj and quiaj, of which the plurals are tass and quiáss, divide and separate as do the demonstratives, for example: "box of matches" is itoj-ʾhi-cuass, that is "fire-box-little"; a case of incorporation (2).

Finally, it seems that they habitually place an i in front of a foreign word. For example the Spanish ñato["snub nose"--Translator] becomes iñato, in which they coincide with the Mocoví Indians. It may be just a simple euphonic exigency.

Chapter VI

Some curious cases of onomatopoea and sound similarities.

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Only very few words in this Indian language can be considered onomatopoetic, that is, imitative of the sounds they express. Which phenomenon of sound imitation is considered by some to be the origin of human language, developed later by man's intelligence.

To shout or yell is óhn; lightning is jlépp; dumb or mute is huó-huó; cough is cacojtáss; cricket is li-tzil; parrot is quie-quié

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1. I find in my notes that taj is sometimes a shortened form of oitaj, meaning "almost."

2. In Mataco, "matches" is translated as "little fires," itoj-huaj (euphonic h in place of c), thus following our usage even in this detail.

and pelican [sic.], commonly called chajá ["Crested screamer" 182
is W. H. Hudson's name for this large, goose sized bird--Translator] is tzá-coj, both names being derived from the bird's call. 190
Many other words are to be found similar to these.

Following I shall set down a few Mataco words which are similar in sound to those found in Old World languages. 192

Si["yes"--Translator] in Mataco is hié, in English "yes," in German ya, and in Italian gia. "No" in Mataco is ka, in the Tuscan dialect of Italian cke, and kein ("nobody") in German. "Son" is tzé or ssé in Mataco, tzé in Bohemian, tzae tze in Chinese. Enfermo ["ill"--Translator] is iell or yell in Mataco, "ill" in English. "For" is op in Mataco, ob in Latin--it may be added that p and b are interchangeable in all languages with the greatest of ease. "Countryside" or "field" is ajlú in Mataco, agro in Latin and Italian -- let it be remembered that the Matacos use l in place of r, so that ajlú takes the place of ajrú -- "dog" is sinoj in Mataco, cynos in Greek. The next few words contain similar letters in inverted order such as in the previously mentioned "melon" - nelom: "rooster" is húh or kúh in Mataco, coq in French; "cricket" is li-tzil in Mataco, zillo in Tuscan; casa ["house"--Translator] is hauet in Mataco, haus in German, [248] "house" in English, and huasi in Quichua; con ["with"--Translator] is uuitd in Mataco, "with" in English; "and" is ut-cuei in Mataco, atque in Latin.

Furthermore, and as an additional point of interest, I must say that there is, in Chinese, a superabundance of the syllables tzií, tzié, etc., schiá, schié, (sch to be pronounced as is the Catalonian x), tzá, tzé, etc., as also ttai or tai, which mean "big"; and lo, the meaning of which is still unknown to me but which I repeatedly come across at the end of words. This fact, combined with its pronunciation, which is practically identical to Mataco pronunciation, merits serious reflection on the part of the linguist, not because of any real relationship but as a phenomenon of concurrence.

Chapter VII

Gender, Number, case, syncopation. Article? A2

A3

a. Gender

It does not seem to me that the nouns have gender -- only in pronouns and in demonstrative adjectives are there to be found certain changes which make me suspect a gender differentiation. Yet this goes no further than the merest suspicion.

Withal, they do suffix the ending tziná to the names of female animals, which means "female," and, when used alone and not attached to another word, means "woman"; for example, "mare" is yélaiáj-tziná. In order to indicate a male animal they usually add asnáj, which actually means "male."

b. Number

I was so sure that these inhabitants of the Chaco must possess A3
a plural formed by the joining or placing in close proximity of 171
some word indicative of the concept of plurality, such as "much" or some other like word, that I was for ever in search of it. Actually there was nothing unnatural about such an idea -- the Guaranî Indians do in fact use such a linguistic device, heta, which placed beside a singular immediately imparts plurality to it; the Quichuas also do likewise by suffixing cuna, and these two nations of Indians are or were neighbors of the Matacos. Many other peoples use the self same artifice which is called agglutination; the Akka of Africa do so too.

It seemed therefore quite natural that the smaller should ovo
follow in the footsteps of the larger. Furthermore, is it not often stated that agglutination is common to the less advanced languages?

[249] It is a fact that in this case also it would seem as if the peoples who utilize this recourse are the least advanced -- actually this is very far from the truth.

In short, every language system has its weak points, which nevertheless do not detract from their basic usefulness among those who utilize it. It was therefore proper for me to accept this linguistic canon as a sort of maxim.

However, the answers to my questions in which plurals were used were anything but satisfactory. Sometimes the plural of a word would end in one way, then another plural would end differently, and in all plurals there could be inserted a *ntocq*, meaning "much." What is more, just as all the rest of the expression varied, so also did one remain in the dark regarding the element connoting plurality. I would formulate my questions with numbers and the doubt still remained. For example: "Two horses?" I would ask, and the answer would come "horses two"; "two men?" "two *icnú*, *icnul*, or *icnuíl*." They appeared to be endings with different variations due to changes in pronunciation rather than to any other cause. 192 193

I repeat all this because it may be of some service to any of the many travelers who enjoy spending time among savages, either in Africa or in America. If they are not already too proud of their own knowledge and acumen it may stand them in good stead.

Meanwhile, I was surprised to gather that "we" and "you" [*vosotros* is 2nd person plural in familiar address--Translator] were formed directly from the singulars "I" and "thou" [*tú*, is 2nd person singular in familiar address--Translator] by means of the same affix. Thus, from *noj-lám*, meaning "I," *noj-lám-il*, "we," is derived; from *am* -- meaning "thou," they form *am-il*, meaning "you" [2nd person plural--Translator] -- but in this case it was a matter only of those pronouns in which there are many rule exceptions. Nevertheless this very thing, by calling my attention to a given case, gave me the key to the riddle.

These Matacos not only have a plural which they form with *ntocq* -- "much," but also possess others which are arrived at in different ways and by means of assorted inflections. To sum up, they have divers declensions which are exclusive of each other and which hold, in a general way, to the following rules:

Words ending in either *o* or velar *e* add *i* to make the plural. Thus *colo*, meaning "foot," becomes *coloi*, "feet"; *huentié*, "little bird," becomes *huentiéi*, "little birds." Words ending in *aj* change *j* to *ss* -- in this category fall all the augmentatives ending in *taj* and all diminutives ending in *quiaj*, for example: igüela -- "moon" or "month," becomes igüelass, "months"; yelataj -- "horse," becomes yelatass, "horses." Words ending in u take an l, which is pronounced by pressing part of the tongue against the palate and sounds like il, for example: cannú, meaning needle, becomes cannúl, almost cannuil, "needles." Words ending in t, oj and other letters take ess for the plural; thus: yápset, "fish," becomes yápetéss, "fishes"; tdoj, "hide or skin," becomes tdojess, "hides." Words ending in l often add ess [sic.], sometimes losing the final l in the process; example: tzel, "belly," [250] tzeliss, "bellies"; yel meaning "a sick person" becomes yiss (or yéliss), "sick persons", -- this last being a fine example of shift.

Many exceptions have their place here too, of course, and probably other rules, but they are not included here so as to avoid becoming burdensome.

I am almost willing to believe that they have a dual approach to plurality as have the Araucano and Guaraní Indians, and the Greeks in Europe, but I cannot give any real assurance of it. To this effect I site from my notes: cqüéí -- the hand, cquéyai, both hands; noj-lamil -- we, noj-lamáss, we two; amil you [2nd person plural familiar --Translator], amass, you two. I repeat, however, that I am not sure but that it is a duplicated plural form.

As far as numerals go they can use, or not, as they see fit, a plural for following nouns, in which case use of a plural is, so to speak, redundant. Adjectives they do not pluralize, and they place them before nouns.

c. Case

I have not come across enough examples to allow me to affirm that this language has case declension unless one wishes to construe as such the genitive suffix ca. Here is an example of the use of this suffix: Peilo-ca-Uicquii, which means "Pedro's people." Their use of postpositions (corresponding to our prepositions) can be considered as cases.

In spite of this I must give fair warning that the personal pronouns "I" and "thou," at least in the singular, have case declension, while toj, meaning "this one" seems only to have an accusative toja.

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The declension of those pronouns which I have been able to glean are as follows:

Singular	Singular
Nom. I: nojlam, nu, noʾni	Nom. Thou: am, or ham, and a
Gen. of me: noj-ca	Gen. Of thee: aj-cá
Dat. To me: nú-ho	Dat. To thee: ám-u or hám-u
Ac. Me: nuy-a or nu	Ac. Thee: ám-a and a-i
Ablat. With me: nuy-ej	Ablat. With thee: ám-ej or ám-quie.

Plural	Plural
Nom. We: noj, lam-il, na or inát	Nom. You [familiar]: am-il or a
Nom. [sic.] Us: noj, lam-áss and in-namáss	Nom. [sic.] You [familiar]: am-ass, or á

It is my opinion that the ending l and il must be some degeneration of the word el, which means "other" and which was originally used to express the plural, which plural is therefore [251] nothing else than a forgotten agglutinative form which has evolved by means of progressive alterations.

d. Syncopation

Syncopation is very common in this language, doubtless for reasons of euphony, but the alteration and confusion it brings about in words give rise to many errors and make the study of the language very difficult. For example: "Do you love me?" is Yajhémín nuya, which is a shortened form of yaj-a-hemin nuya. "I do not love you" is Namahemin, which comes from Nu-am-a-hemin. I myself, shortly before writing these lines, thought that nam must mean "no," which then threw me into confusion because in this present example I could not find the particle nu, expressive of the first person. Only after having checked and compared numerous sentences were my eyes opened to the real facts.

Chapter VIII

Regarding Negative Forms

The Mataco language contains a great many negatives which occupy various positions. It is curious to note their strange similarity to the Indian languages of North America spoken by nations which one would never have supposed to be related at all.

The most common of these negatives is *ka*, meaning "no," which can be used alone and also prefixed to adjectives thus contradicting the meaning of the word; for example: *matt* means "it is true," while *ka-matt* means "it is false." It is strange indeed that the Akkas, those so-called pygmies of Africa have this same word in their language with the same meaning "no," according to the grammatical essay of Abbot Beltrame of Verona.

Another negative particle is *tdé*, which is always suffixed, for example: *mát* -- "true"; *matti-tdé*, "false."

Note the extra *i* which is added to soften the word. These additions and eliminations of stray letters cause great difficulty and make the student of this language lose his way at every turn, despairing of ever getting to the end of his problems. Let us look at another example: *nu-huen* means "I have," *hue-ni-tde*, "I have not."

Then there is *am*, which is prefixed to verbs, as for example: *n'am-huen*, which signifies "I do not have." There also is *yaj*, which is both interrogative and imperative and is prefixed to verbs; it is the *ne* of the Latins, except for its position. Another negative particle is *laja*, which also means "without." Examples of the foregoing are: "Don't kill me," *yaj-lon-nu*; "Do you love me?", *Yaj-a-hemin-nuya*? "Widow" is *laja-chiécuó-ya*, that is, "husbandless one."

Chapter IX

Regarding Adjectives

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a. Their usage

I have now before me the tangled problem of adjectives, comparatives, superlatives, numerals, and verb flections. There is no reason to prefer one to another and so I start with the one first mentioned.

One would think that adjectives ought to be like so many isolated plant stems, growing in such a way that a mere touch of the hand would be sufficient to turn them aside in order to pass easily by. Such is not the case. There are some which have their roots and even their branches so intertwined and enmeshed that one has need of an axe to untangle them.

There are a good many adjectives which are so rooted as to make it impossible to ascertain their beginning and their end -- in fact, most of the Mataco adjectives fall into this category. There are others, though, the geneology of which is quite evident. Among these are the possessives, which are formed from pronominal roots to which the particle ca, meaning "of," (also used as a genitive postposition) and co, which must be considered as a modification of ca, has been attached. In addition to ca and co they also use lo with the same possessives, especially, or so it seems to me, with "of mine," "of thine"; thus "of mine" (nuj) is nuj-ca, nuj-co, and nuj-lo; while "of thine" is ac-co and al-lo; and "whose?" ("of whom?") is atdec-lo.

Another way of forming these adjectives is with the addition of tzaj. For example: "fear" is uáí or huái and "fearful" is huain-tzaj. Another possibility is with ya, but this is really more like a present participle. Example: nu-huai-ya, means "I fearful," "that I am afraid"; acchecuoya means "that you have a wife" or "that you have a husband."

Yet another way is to place the postposition ej beside the noun. Example: "hunger" is na-in-ĺo; while "hungry one" is na-in lo nej; "now" is cquiá, (which literally means "fresh" or "new") and "of now," "as of now" is cquiá-yej.

And while on this subject of adjectives it is worth remarking that practically all those which express the opposite of some quality, usually of a good quality, are made up of the adjective denoting that quality plus a negative particle which either precedes or follows it. Thus, for example: "true" is *matt*, and "false," *ka-matt* or *mattildé*, that is to say "not true." "Good" and "pretty" or "nice" are *hiss* and *tzî*, while "ugly" is *kat-zía* and *tzitdé*; "far" is *tocuery*, "near," *tocuei-tde*, which can also be expressed by *ca-tu-ta*, in which *catú* means "elbow" and by analogy "curve," "around the corner," and so forth.

These negative particles are also used with nouns. For example: [253] "remedy" or "cure" is *ckia*, while poison is *ka-ckía* ("no remedy," "no cure"). Do we not find the same type of usage in our own languages when we say "uncertain" for "not certain" and "discourteous" for "not courteous"?

One might say, however, that these Indians lack certain refinements of which our language can boast and which tend to soften certain expressions, as for instance the subtle distinction between "false" and "not true," "far" and "not near."

Be that as it may, they still are not lacking in other distinctions, [609] such as that existing between "stranger" and "foreigner." The former they call *ajlú-taj-jlé-lé*, which means "outsider," and the latter they call *ic-quiomjlé-lé*, that is, "he from below." And so he is, for from the Mataco point of view foreigners live "below," downriver and off past Paraguay. Upstream from them live the whites, whom they call *Chihuéle*.

Where did they get this word *Chihuéle*? Has it something to do with color? "White" is in their language *pelaj*, and "yellow," *yaccatdé*, that is, "not black," which proves that the opposite of black is for them yellow. Surely they do not consider us green or blue, however much their eyes may suffer from Daltonism. Can it be that they look upon us as red? This cannot be so either for red is *icquiótt*, which is a far cry from *Chihuéle*.

The actual fact is that *Chihuéle* means "good looking men."

Let us study this. Chí, as we have already stated, is the same as tzí, and also the same as quí. Now tzi is a root found in ka-tzi-a and in tzitdé which mean "not good" (or "not nice") and "good not" (or "nice not"). Furthermore it is to be found in tzilataj or chilataj, meaning "good," "nice." (The local whites, by the way, mispronounce the first part of this word and say chilátta). Chilatáj is made up, in the first place, of táj which is an augmentative particle, and Chíla. In the word Chíla, the la is a particle which, as was seen in the section treating lo, ca and co, if suffixed to the root has an adjective-forming function. So it is that Chí is the root giving the basic meaning to Chílataj. Chilataj, however, means "good," "nice" to a superlative degree, so that chi is indicative of "beauty."

We have seen that c-lelé is a word which means "which is of." Now, there can be no difficulty in accepting, for a language such as this one which sacrifices so many nuances of sound, that c-lelé has become modified and changed into güele or huéle by degeneration or because of some other shift the laws of which have not yet been discovered. Therefore Chihuéle is the same as Chic-léle, which means "those who are of the good (or nice, or goodlooking) ones," that is "The Goodlooking Ones."

I hope I may be forgiven for taking pleasure in an etymology which allows me to participate in, (although I do not deserve to) and be counted as possessing one of those four qualities declared by the Greek philosopher as indispensable for happiness, to wit: comfort, true friends, love of music and good looks [254] or to be considered so, which amounts to the same thing for all practical purposes.

Now amongst these Indians, even if one is somewhat ugly, one must yet, by comparison seem almost goodlooking, which is great -- are not these word forms therefore rational? They reveal a process of word formation by agglutination.

b. Regarding comparatives

In order to form the comparatives they use homo ehom, which means "more," together with taj, which expresses superiority.

These two words in a comparison are not joined by any equivalent to our "than" [In Spanish comparatives are formed with *de* or *que*; the foregoing "than" does not fully translate these terms--Translator.], such as in the following example: "Peter is a better boy than Paul," because they, in this case, would also say, by means of a circumlocution: "Peter is a better boy than Paul is not." This is a somewhat strange construction, but I find that it crops up repeatedly in my notes. Very often the particle *ya* follows the comparative, which leads me to believe that there are other comparative forms, although I have not discovered them as yet.

c. Regarding the Superlative

To form the superlative they habitually use *ntócq* which means "much," as is the custom in so many other tongues. They sometimes lengthen the sound of a syllable. For example: "far" is *tocuéy*; "very far" is *tocuéey*, the word being accompanied by appropriate gestures. This is also customary amongst the Araucanos and we ourselves use it in certain cases. It is quite natural and logical.

Another way of arriving at a superlative construction is by affixing *a* to the positive -- for instance: the comparative of the Indian word "his," which means "nice, pretty," is *ha-is*, "very pretty, very nice"; *tocuéy*, far, becomes *a-tocuéy*, very far.

As I have already said they have an augmentative *taj* and a diminutive *quiaj* or *cuaj*, particles which are suffixed and which are declinable while the noun to which they are attached remains unalterable -- their declension consists in changing *j* to *ss* for the plural.

In order to say "less" they use *yaj-lom*, which is the same as *yaj-lehom*, that is "no more," made up of the particle *le* plus *hom*; another example of agglutination, common in this type of adjective. This language is apparently extraordinarily logical, and once having started out in a given direction persists in it to the end. The problem then, in the first place, is to understand this construction, and then to keep from losing sight of it in its many twists and turns. [255]

Chapter X

Regarding Numerals

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In general it can be said that the Indians of the Chaco can count only up to four. This holds true for: the Mocovies who are bounded on the south by the provinces of Santa Fe and Córdoba and on the west by the province of Santiago; the Matacos who in the same direction have a common border with the latter and with Orán; the Tobas who are bounded by said nations and the river Paraguay, along the banks of which they penetrate Bolivian territory; the Vilelas and Chulupíes, who at the time of this writing amount to only a tribe or family or two and are either dispersed among the other nations named above or have been absorbed by them.

However, there also are the Chiriguanos and possibly other nations in addition, all of whom are established in the Bolivian section of that immense wooded plain called the Gran Chaco and who can count indefinitely. There are also the other Indian groupings who live in the northern regions of the Chaco and who are able to count beyond four if I am to give credence to my first mate on the boat who, although he was a Mataco, supplied me with terms expressive of larger figures. These he had gathered from outside contact.

A propos of this matter of being able to count only up to four, OOD I see that Quatrefages, in his last work La especie humana ["The Human Species"--Translator], seems to doubt this fact, which he interprets differently yet without supplying any explanation for his thesis. It would seem that he could not bring himself to admit such a phenomenon, and would only go as far as to accept that certain peoples might lack actual numbers beyond four but never the concept of such numbers. But even if we can accept such a hypothesis as possible psychologically so to speak, the facts, looked at from the point of view of philology, belie it. Understanding as we do that there is the closest of affinities between word and idea, one must admit that the latter, without the former, at very best can only exist in a vague, confused and undefined state which evades communication. We ourselves, for instance, are unable to use the technical terms of a given art or science of which we are not masters, however well we may know and differentiate between their products.

Just to clarify this I shall cite a personal case which will be helpful to the reader in arriving at an opinion. 900

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I was talking to a chief who was recounting his feats of prowess to me for the first time.

In answer to my question: "Where are you from?" he unexpectedly answered: Num-maitta-ntocq-Te̋uj-tocuéy, stretching and then drawing back his right arm as he pointed towards the North.

[256] I was very much surprised and said, interrupting him: Ntde-ˀhije? -- "Where?" -- I had understood him to say that he wanted to tell me about a town on the Teuco River, called Umaitá like that town in Paraguay near the mouth of the Bermejo, and my curiosity became excited to a great pitch with the idea that I was about to make an ethnographic discovery of importance.

What he had actually tried to say to me was this: "I-(nu) killed many far away on the Teuco."

Nu ilon ntócq (I have killed many)...; and right away he commenced to count in Mataco from one to four, enclosing his right hand in his left and opening his fingers one by one, all except his thumb. But when he got to four he was at a loss how to go on, yet as he was squatting, he began to make vertical lines in the earth with his finger saying Toj each time he did so, which means "this one," and every now and then he would raise his head and his hand with his thumb concealed by his four fingers and say, looking at me: Uitd toj which means "and this also," and thus he continued about twenty times, always being careful to drive home to me that in addition to the lines he was making on the ground I must remember the original four which he had counted on his hand. At last he put an end to his counting by saying ntocq ntocq which is "many, many."

And this was very true. This chief had been at one time the scourge of the frontier whites and the whip of his Indian enemies until finally, old and much battered by the whites, he left off warring, gained a government pension and settled down with all his followers -- very much reduced in numbers -- near Fort Gorriti, on the left bank of the Bermejo River. It happened that near Fort Aguirre, on the right bank of the Teuco, some 50 kilometers northeast of Gorriti, another band of Indians had attempted an invasion but were themselves the object of a surprise attack in their village, part of their number being killed and others imprisoned. 727

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These latter, bound and with their hands tied behind their backs, elbow to elbow and forming a chain of some 30 or 40 individuals, were handed over to the chief so that he might put them to death. He did most of the killing himself with a spear. While the massacre was in progress most of the victims remained silent, while others kept up a continual murmuring such as is done in their religious ceremonies. These were, without a doubt, witchdoctors.

I passed through the place of this tragedy five years after the event and could see no sign of human bones belonging to the victims' unburied corpses. The flood waters had carried them off and the winds had covered all remains. Only after much searching and with the help of a soldier who had witnessed the event was I able to find three skulls by digging among some bushes. The national government tried to punish the officer in charge of Fort Aguirre and it [257] is possible that this was done. However, one must accept the fact that there is no possible compatibility between civilized and savage elements; and all individual philanthropy, all a priori reasoning made far from the scene, lose their practical validity in this theater of fighting brought about by the head-on collision of the two races. Each one thinks that the destruction of the enemy is the easiest and also the most natural expedient in the world. Therefore the final extermination of the Redskins at the hands of the whites is inevitable, by means of cold steel, fire, expatriation and mass dispersion as though they were beasts.

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Coming back to the matter of numerals, one must never be led to suppose that these Indians are not aware that 10 fish are half of 20 fish. A dog, when he rushes upon a second bone thrown to him and growls because some other dog tries to get the first bone, is also responding to the same perceptual stimulus. Nevertheless the fact of not possessing an adequate word for expressing this recognition reveals, in my opinion, a lack of abstraction. The form of a language and the very manner in which words evolve from their original sounds owe much to the state of maturity of the speakers' capability for mental abstraction.

Regarding the Mataco words used to indicate the first four numbers, I must say that their great length and the gesticulations which went with them surprised me very much. It seemed to me that each one of these expressions, if it was to justify its accompanying

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gesticulations, must be a whole sentence. Even though a great deal of time has elapsed I think I can still explain them and not fall into error as I do so.

"One" is hoté-cuuaj ʼhi, and one finger is raised. One can also say hoteji and hotecoaji. Now hoté means "as," cuuáj means "finger," and hi (nasal h) is a particle which indicates possession, container etc. so, not worrying too much about this small elemental difference which is so common in every language, and especially in this one which undergoes so many shifts, we may say that the translation of hotécuaji is: "as finger has" ("this which I show"). 802 201 192

"Two" is hoté quuasi, and two fingers are raised. Quuas is the plural, so to speak, of cuoaj according to this tongue, and thus the translation of the above is "as fingers has."

"Three" is laj tdi qua yél, and three fingers are raised, the little finger remaining folded and covered by the left hand. Now laj means "without" or "no"; el means "other"; quai is too similar to quoají to allow for doubt, and so we may say that the translation is "without the other finger." The same may be said for lája echecuoya -- "widower without a husband" [sic].

"Four" is tdi qualéss híquí and I don't know how to go about translating it literally and so shall not try. However one can perceive that in qualéss there is a plural iqui form, which is a word that often accompanies hi, and which [258] is to be found in phrases in which we have the idea of "to be" expressed, with other analogous ones -- it is therefore probable that it refers to the gestures which go with each numeral.

These gestures were not made only by that chief but also by other Indians of the central Cháco and by Faustino who could count as well as any of us. There must be some relation between the gestures and the words. The etymologies which I offer, in my opinion, explain the case more satisfactorily than those which are usually given in analogous philological problems.

However, one must not judge the worth and elegance of the original by the literal translations. Where would the elegance of most compound words be if we translated their Greek originals directly? For example; "Panorama" -- "all seen....!!" 000

And as far as the intellectual value of this manner of expressing numerals is concerned, is its genesis not quite natural? The Guaraní

Indians manage by means of a similar artifice, at least with some 000 of their numerals such as "ten" or "twenty" in place of which they say "two hands" and "two hands and two feet." And it is probable that, should we analyze the etymologies of numerals among other Indians and other nations, we would find something similar. What shall we say of Roman numerals? Do they not represent as many fingers as are needed to count up to three, and a whole hand for five (V) and a hand minus a finger for four (IV), and two superimposed hands -- one being inverted -- for the (X)? It is quite clear that Roman written numerals are to Arabic numerals what hieroglyphs are to writing and what Mataco numeral expression is to the spoken tongue.

It is precisely from nature that man must first have derived the first instruments for expressing his needs and for the development of his ideas.

Chapter XI

Pronouns and Pronominal Particles (1)

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1. Interpolated chapter.

a. Personal Pronouns

The most commonly used personal pronouns are the following:

	Singular		Plural
1.	I - no-j-lam	1.	We - no-j-lam-il; no-j-lam-ass (dual?)
2.	Thou - ám, hám	2.	You (familiar form) am-il and am-ass (dual?)
3.	This one - tój	3.	Those ones toj-ess.

I also have come upon inat, inená and innamáss as plural first person pronouns.

b. Pronominal Particles

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These particles are prefexed to nouns and verbs in every case where the state or action refers to persons; which is why they are so frequently encountered, to the extent that in a dialogue there is hardly a word to which they are not affixed. This phenomenon, added to the elision to which their vowels fall heir when brought into contact with the vowels of the words which they precede, often produces the illusion that they are part of the root of those words.

These particles are as follows in singular and plural, for nouns and verbs:

1st My (singular object), My (plural object), Our (singular object) Our (plural object), I and Us: no, nu, ni, na.
2nd Thy (singular object), Thy (plural object), Your (familiar plural form with singular object), Your (familiar plural form with plural object), Thou and You (objective) -- a, ha.
3rd Of his, of theirs, that one, those ones -- lo, lu, le.

In addition to these particles of relation they customarily use others which are also prefixed to a given word root and which give the absolute or general meaning to the expression. The particles are more frequently t and l, and often la. For example: "flame of fire" is itoj-cúáca; "flame" (in general) is la-cúáca; "hut door" is huet-pè, while "door" (in general) is la-pé or hla-pé.

c. Demonstrative Pronouns

Singular	Plural
This one -- Toj	These ones -- Toj ess
and Toj-tzi,	and Toj-ess-tzí,
Toj-chí	Toj-ess-chi
and Toj-quí.	and Toj-ess-quí
That one yonder -- Toj-licné	These ones yonder -- Toj-ess-licné
That one -- Toj-láni and	Those ones -- Toj-ess
Toj-léc-tí	

In combination, *toj* or *toj-ess* precede and *tzí*, etc., *licné*, *laní* etc., follow the word or phrase.

d. Interrogative Pronouns

Who? -- *adhéj* or *âdéj*.
What? -- *atde* or *hat dezu*. [260]

e. Reflexive Pronouns

J-lam -- suffixed -- meaning "same," (the Latin *met*) is used as personal pronoun and is the root element in the adverbs *j-lam-mej*, which means "always."

Chapter XII

Regarding Verbs

a. General Observations

The verbs are the really difficult elements in this language to nail down. I confess my ignorance; I cannot even point out an infinitive, an infinitive that is, which I can be absolutely sure *is* an infinitive. It might be, if I had sufficient time, that I could get to the bottom of the problem but I just do not have enough time to work on it at present. I must add, however, in defense of my good name, that the fault does not lie entirely with my limited intelligence but rather is in greater part due to the many intricacies of this wretched language and to the absolute lack of even the vaguest idea of grammatical forms on the part of my Indian interpreters. When, for example, one asks them how to say "to eat," they are at a loss for an answer, or else give a different answer every time they are confronted with the question. One must ask them how to say "I want to eat," and then "let's eat" and in this way lead them gently to the basic question. And then one comes up against a solid wall, for "to eat" together with "to want" is expressed by a special form which includes both ideas. And so it goes.

And then there are the different forms and ways of saying things. For instance, Spanish for *yo tengo* ("I have") reproduces the French *c'et a moi* and the Latin *id est mihi*, and one must run the risk of saying that *es* ("is") means *tengo* ("have"). Well, it seems that these Indians have some of these idiomatic expressions too.

And what will the reader think if I say that I have not even been able to discover the plural of verbs? There is a particle *en* or *hen*, according to the ending of the word which precedes it, which undoubtedly expresses plurality, but I do not know whether it is a pronominal particle or rather a real verbal inflection. For example: "dance" [singular, imperative--Translator] is *catin* and "dance" [plural, imperative--Translator] is *catinén*. So far so good, but let us look further -- "let us dance" is *inát-catin*, in which the *en* has become lost and *inát* meaning "we," has appeared, but in an analogous case this does not happen at all -- for instance: "touch" [singular, imperative--Translator] is *hen quié*, while "let us touch," is *inénhequién*, in which there are a number of changes for reason of euphony and pronunciation ease [261] but among which there can easily be distinguished, in the background, the *en* which ~~had~~ disappeared in "let us dance." This, in itself, would not be a serious problem for it might mean only that there were two plural forms. The real trouble lies in that if we combine the example with subject and object we notice that *hen* or *en* agrees with the object and not with the subject, the verb never taking on a passive or neuter quality as happens with certain Latin verbs such as *videor*, *loquor*, etc.

For example: "kill [imperative, singular--Translator] the sheep (sing.)" is *l-lón tzonatáj*; "Peter has killed the sheep (sing.)" is *Peiló ilón tzonataj*; "Peter has killed the sheep (plural) is *Peiló ilonén tzonatáss.* Where now is the rule which required the particle *en* in "dance" (imperative, plural), "let us dance," etc.? This type of confusion crops up dozens of times.

Another confusing example: *iloje* means to cure; *iil* means "the sick (one)" but in order to render "the Indians are curing the sick" into the Mataco language one must say *uicquiei ilojeje tojiilnen.* Where does the "rule of incorporation" begin and where does it end in this sentence?

So all I can say with any certainty is that en and hen are more often than not found in conjunction with plurality. I say more often than not because it is not always so. For example: "The whites have killed a sheep" is Tsiguuéle tzonataj. Apparently this plural construction with en is not used with the verb except when the object of the action of that verb is plural, or when the plural subject of the verb is one which receives the verb's action, as for instance in "to dance." This seems to indicate that in the syntax of these verbs there is a great difference when compared to ours. There is possibly a similarity in some chases to English verbal usage -- i.e., "I am told," "We are told" etc., in place of "They have told me," "They have told us," which is analogous, after all to the Latin neuter in videor, etc.

b. Regarding Tenses

To judge from the welter of verb forms which I have before me I think I can give assurance that this language has many conjugations. On this score it would be similar to Guaraní, which also has many, and would be very different from the Araucano language, which has only one, and also from the Quichua which likewise, or so it seems to me, has only one -- though an extremely complicated one in compound tenses.

From all the foregoing the reader will gather that I cannot possibly present one or more types of verb conjugations because I have not been able to describe them. Despite this, however, I am in a position to give some forms for a few of the tenses.

One of the more exact of these is the future, which is expressed by means of the present plus a final syllable la. For example: "he returns" is tapil, while "he will return" is tapil-la. This is what might be called the absolute future, for there is another future which I shall call the dubitative and which is formed with the addition of pbiye, which means "may be," this being added at the end. The lá future form is also used to [262] connote duty or obligation to do something, which is also true of our language.

Another form is the past, which consists of adding é to the present form preceded by a repetition of the last letter of the present tense form -- for it is one of this language's idiosyncracies to repeat certain letters, as is done in Italian and so many others, with the exception of Spanish. Example: "he arrives" is *yom*, while "he has arrived" is *yommé*.

The remote past or preterite, however, is formed by placing the adverb of time *náji* or *náje* next to the present, the *n* being replaced by another letter, usually *l*, if it falls pleasantly on the ear. For example: "he kills" is *ilóm*, while "he killed" (preterite) is *ilonnaje*. Sometimes *aje* alone is added, as for instance: "he eats"--*théuccue*, "he ate" -- *théu quáje*.

Another way of forming the immediate past (which almost corresponds to the imperfect) is by adding *nenna*, which they use either whole or else reduced to one or other of its two syllables according to the speakers personal whim.

These two words *náje* and *nénna* are the same ones which are used in the word "yesterday" -- *icuala-náje* and "today" -- *icuala-nenná*; (see how logical these savages are), and, as is the case with the future *lá*, are set off from the verbal element proper in order to allow for the addition of some infix or other, which may even be a whole phrase.

c. Regarding Personal Flections

It would seem, to judge from the above examples, as if the language of these Indians were totally lacking in verbal endings which had anything to do with persons, although they are -- to a certain extent -- related to number by means of the suffix *en*. However, be it because of a merely casual pronunciation difference, be it intentional and related to the person of the verb, the fact is that I find the *e* changed to *i* in the first person of the past tense in the following examples: "I arrived" -- *yammi*; "I returned" -- *tapini*; "I ate" (remote past or preterite) -- *tdeucquáji*. But it happens anyway, that these changes in verbs to agree with the person concerned are not needed for each has a pronominal prefix attached to it, to wit: *nu*, *a*, *lo*, *inat*, which correspond to "I," "thou," "he," "we," etc., which undergo certain variations such as: *no* and *ni*, *lu* and *li*, *inné*, and I don't remember which others.

However, in negative usage, which is formed with the suffix *tde*, meaning "no," the word seems to take on a sort of flectional form, but this is to be attributed solely to the desire for euphony. For example: "I see" -- *nu huenn*; "I do not see" -- *nu-huenni-tdé*, instead of *nuhenntdé*; "short" is *isset* or *nissét* while "not short" is

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nu yissti tdé, rather than *nuissetde*; "is he dead?" is *yáj ii?*, and "he is not dead" is *yini tde*, instead of *yill tdé*.

I do not go into further details because I would continually find it necessary to become embroiled in forms about which very little is known as to their differentiations -- and these variations become all the more numerous as the [263] relations which are treated become more complex. Let us take a single example, and that from among the more elementary ones. "Did the Chief (mine) return?" is *Yaj tapil-le nucauniá*?; "He did not return" -- *Tapini-tdé*. In this very simple example, why do we have in one instance *le*, and in the other *ni*? The interrogative is concerned only with the first part, that is, with *yaj*. In my opinion it is quite clear that these changes are the result of an aural whim, and I believe that I can almost say that *tapil-le* is a substitution caused by the *nu* which follows *tapilné*, which is in turn a syncopation of *tapil-nenná*; and so also with *tapi ni*. Now *ab uno disce omnes*.

d. Regarding Reflexive Verbs

They seem to form some reflexive verbs by juxtaposing *j-lam* to the active form. For example: "Pedro killed himself" is *Peiló tilonne j-lam*. This *j-lam* translates the Latin *met* and our own "--self." So the personal pronoun *nojlam* could be "ego met," that is, "I myself," which would cause it to harmonize more closely with the other pronominal elements. I must make clear here that my references, both here and elsewhere, to Latin are not efforts to establish any sort of analogy whatsoever -- I only do so in an effort to make my report more clear.

e. Regarding Verbs in General

It is worthwhile noting how certain verbs whose meaning has become modified keep to their original root. For example: "to walk" is *opil*, "to return" is *tapil*; "to come" is *nom*, "to arrive" is *yom*; "to die" is *iil*, "to kill" is *ilón*; "to shout, call out, say" is *ohn*, to speak *hon* and *hon-quié* (that is "to speak with") corresponds to our "to converse," which is one more proof, in my opinion, of the Indians' quick wit and logical inclination. These expressions could give us the key to the modifying value of certain particles, from which much would be gained regarding the philosophy of language (as in *hon-quié*) and comparative philology, as in *ta-pil*, in which *t* represents repetition of an action -- as retracing one's steps does indeed imply -- and which is found with this meaning in the Araucano language, and, for that matter in ours also as for instance *agitar* [meaning "to shake" or "agitate"--Translator] from *agere*, and the Italian *seguitare* ["To follow"--Translator] which is *seguir* in Spanish; and there are dozens of other examples.

However, it is by means of postpositions that the vast majority of verbs are formed. We have already given the examples *tol-l-ca*, "to come from"; *tol-l-pe*, "to fall from," *tol-l-equíote* "to fall into," all of which are derived from *tol-l*, a word of movement. And I am positive that, according to this rule, if I were to say *toll-quie* (*quie* is the same as *cum* -- "with," as in "company") in place of "to accompany" or "to go with," these Indians would understand me. Further examples? "Peter is dying of hunger" is *Peilo il-lej nainló* (*ej* means "with" in an instrumental sense). And in order to [264] convince the reader that *ej* in this case is not a preposition of *nainló*, "hunger," let us see the following example: "The Indians are dying of hunger" is *Uicquii yil ej-i-én nainló*, that is *yille-ej-én*, in which *ej* precedes *en*, a suffix of the plural verb which is, naturally, attached and suffixed to the latter and not prefixed to the noun. It is therefore not a "preposition" as we shall call it when we study this part of speech.

This type of preposition usage, together with the other changes and variations of which we have so often complained, is not the least of the causes which make for confusion and difficulty in the study of verbs. And in actual fact, what activities can escape the possibility of being expressed by a verb which covers the basic idea and a postpositional particle which assigns a relation to it? Very few indeed. And very few also are the words which do not have one or other of these disguised insertions which crop up now here, now there, now somewhere else and in a different guise, according to the aural requirements of the moment, and which flabbergast the hearer and surprise and confuse him with their inexplicable changes and variations.

One of the verbal forms for expressing actions which include the idea of possession is that of placing *ya* next to the word which expresses the thing possessed. For example: "woman" is chiecua, "to have a woman (or wife)" is chiecuaya; "fear" is huái’, "to be afraid (to have a fear)" is huáya. Another way of indicating possession is as follows: "son" is loss, while "to have sons" is lo lessen; "daughter" is either lo-se or le-ctza, and "to have daughters" is lolessés; "brother" is quiilaj, and "to have brothers" is quiilaliss.

The verb "to be" is not expressed. For example: "I am ugly" is nu-tzi-tdé, which literally means "I goodlooking not."

d. Examples of Verbal Flections

I shall put an end to this very boring matter of the verbs (it has been so for me, I must confess, although I hope it has not for the reader!) by attempting to put together and set down one of the verb conjugations for the indicative mood. I do not guarantee the details -- you already know why -- but I believe that in general it may be accepted as summing up what I know on the subject.

VERB: Ilon -- "to kill."

INDICATIVE MOOD

	Present Tense	Remote Past (Preterite)
Singular:	1. I kill -- nu-ilón	1. I killed -- nu-ilon-náje
	2. Thou killest -- há-ilon	2. Thou killedest -- ha-ilon-náje.
	3. He kills -- l-ilón	3. He killed -- l-ilon-náje or t-ilon-náje

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Plural:	
1. We kill - inat-ilón-én	1. We killed -- inat-ilonnajién
2. You kill -- há-ilon-en	2. You killed -- ha-ilonnajién
3. They kill -- tojéss-ilon-én	3. They killed -- tojéss-ilonnajién.

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IMPERFECT TENSE

Singular: 1. I was killing -- nu-ilonnénna
2. Thou wert killing -- ha-ilonnénna
3. He was killing -- l-ilonnénna

Plural: 1. We were killing -- inat-ilonnénnahén
2. You were killing -- ha-ilonnénnahén
3. They were killing -- tojéss-ilonnénnahén.

PAST PERFECT

Singular: 1. I have killed -- nu-ilonné
2. Thou hast killed -- ha-ilonné
3. He has killed -- le-ilonné
Plural: 1. We have killed -- inat-ilonnehén
2. You have killed -- ha-ilonnehén
3. They have killed -- tojéss-ilonnehén

FUTURE

Singular: 1. I shall kill -- nu-ilón-lá
2. Thou wilt kill -- ha-ilón-lá
3. He will kill -- l-ilón-lá
Plural: 1. We shall kill -- inát-ilon-lá-hen
2. You will kill -- ha-ilon-lá-hen
3. They will kill -- tojéss-ilon-lá-hen.

IMPERATIVE

kill - l-lon.

Let it be understood that the preterite form with náje is used only very rarely, and even less so is the nenná form used.

Do these people have a passive form to their verbs? I don't know. Yet I have noticed that many of the constructions using the passive in the Romance languages are changed about by them

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and rendered into an active form, or at least an intransitive one.

For example: instead of saying "Paul was killed by Pliny," they say "Pliny died because of Paul [sic]" or else "Pliny killed Paul."

I don't think, really, that this necessarily points up an inferiority in their language.

By no means let it be thought that the verbs in this language are easy and simple by virtue of the above conjugation table. It is, in fact, just because they are so jumbled and involved that I am not able to give further moods or tenses, which are so terribly complicated that even now I do not have a firm grasp of their governing rules.

Chapter XIII

Regarding Adverbs

There are a great many adverbs, but those involving time stand out because of the logical manner of their formation which parallels the way in which we form them in our own language. For example: "day" is icuála, which actually means "sun" or "one sun," just as "month" is igũeláj, which literally means "moon"; "beside" [266] is tem-ló; náje, náji or naj mean "past," and also "afterward," in the sense of past time; nenna and na mean "present, now" -- so (quite logically) "today" is icuálanná, that is "present sun"; Spanish mañana is icuála and also quiicuála, in the same way that in Spanish mañana means both "morning" and "tomorrow"; "yesterday" is icuálannáje, that is "the past sun"; "the day before yesterday is icuála el-láje, which means -- since el means "other" and láje is the same as náje -- "the other past sun." Because of some change or harmonious feeling or custom in the language, "the day after tomorrow" is tem-lo icuála, which signifies "beside tomorrow." It is curious that tem-ló is prefixed to icuála to express the idea of a day later and yet náje is suffixed when expressing the idea of a day earlier. Quirks of the language apparently, and yet they must answer to some etymological, not to say philosophical, reason, which resides in their changed position.

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What further attracts my attention is the following: Instead of our "night" they use a word which means "earth," that is, *hunát hunná*, just as for "day" they make use of their word for "sun," as if they had intended to oppose one to the other. It may not be too farfetched to see in this a sort of philosophy in which the earth and the sun represent two opposite principles: darkness and light, good and evil. I, however, have not been able to perceive any such philosophy in their ideology, although it is true that something of this sort -- somewhat materialized -- is to be found in their religion, as we have had occasion to see in an earlier section of this treatise.

And is this business of using the sun, or light, to express the idea of time not an intellectual parallel or approach to the Aryan, for from the Sanscrit *dyu*, that is "light" [Spanish *luz*--Translator] came the Latin *dies*, the Spanish *día*, and the Italian *di*, all of which mean "day" or "day's effort."

Meanwhile, in order to say "this afternoon" they say *hunná* and *quiá-hunná*, and for "last night," *hunná-tzi-nná*, keeping thus to the same form and sequence followed in the order of words which we saw in "today," "tomorrow," etc.

Furthermore, their expression for "sky" is *ppe-lé*, which must be translated as "that which is above," from *ppé*, "above" and *lé* which is a contraction of *lél-lé* or *c-lel-lé*, a patronimic word which is used to express the concept of origin, provenience, fatherland, etc. 192 821

It is said that savages have no abstract ideas, but I ask, is the idea of "always" or "never" abstract or not? Without waiting for an answer I say that these Indians in question have the word *inne-mid* which expresses "never," and *c-lam-mej* for "always," which they derive, respectively, from *innem* -- "more" (Italian *mai*, Latin *umquam*) and the negative *d*; and from *j-lam*, meaning "same" plus the postposition *ej*. 192 196

It may be objected these are expressions made up of words which separately mean something more limited, which is valid as far as the objection goes. The French, let it be remembered [267] say *toujours*, "all the days," with the meaning of "always" and thus express an idea which is indefinite, or rather infinite, by means of a word which of itself has a limited meaning as is the case with "day." The fact of the matter is that a given abstraction is not limited to the words used to convey it but hinges rather on the intention behind it. If this were not so what could one say in defense of the English word "always"? 192 196

While we are on this subject let me mention that the particles naje and nenná -- the latter sometimes missing its first syllable, sometimes its last and shifting from i to e [sic] -- are used to make two verb tenses. The first, that is naje, being employed for the remote past or preterite and the other for the past perfect. For example: "to return" is tapil; "he returned" is tapil láje; "he has returned" is tapil-lé (the second l in both cases is the same as n, as was explained above in the treatment of icuála-el-láje). 192 196 805

In place of "midday" or "noon" they say icuála icni, which, as far as I can make out means "high sun" or "up above sun"; and in order to convey the idea of "midnight" they say hunnat-quiú-nej, which I take to mean "low earth" or "underneath earth." For "it is early" they say inataj, and for "it is late," hunáj.

They have a syllable, tde, or dthé, or ntdé, which is the basic element for a great number of adverbs of place and of time. For example: "why?" is atdyécque; "where?" is tdené; "whence?" is dtel che; "how?" is atde-tzú; "how much?" is tde-hoté; "when?" is tdé-naj-hote. Hoté alone means "as," and naj expresses the further meaning that the question refers to a somewhat remote period in the past. Let it be noted that wherever a precedes it usually refers to "thou," since the question is asked of a second person. This goes to show how important it is to know the circumstances of time (tense) and person to which the questions refer, when writing the answers.

I am afraid that I shall bore the reader with this mass of data on the Mataco language, and yet I do not know, for the life of me how to keep from telling that little which I have been able to learn of it and gather in the limited free time allowed me by my professional work and which usually comes only in the very late hours of the night. If I make digressions to keep the reader from becoming tired I fear that I shall write too lengthily, and if I make no digressions and write a straight report I fear to be too dry and boring. . . . Certainly I know not which way to turn. Who will suggest some bright idea which will afford escape from this slough? No one? 500

Then we must remain in it. But then, my dear reader, if there is still one whom I can call thus, be benevolent to me and my unfortunate work. I beg you for the sake of the love I have for you and of the love I hope you have for me... because of those hours I have stolen from Morpheus while thinking of you and trying to untangle the most intricately intertwined Mataco mesh which has been until now virgin; and I beg you -- even by the mockery which I myself feel falls upon me as I appear to neglect the exact roots of mathematics for the last analysis, believe me, some good may [268] come from all this at a time when you may wish to study a little of the prehistoric history of this people to be found here in South America -- for with the tiny light afforded by philology we may well attempt to discover whether these Redskins were at least as closely related to each other as we are to the Croats. And if this is not reason enough for you..... miserere mei.

Chapter XIV

Regarding Prepositions

Prepositions in this language as in so many others make up, 193
to a great extent, the base and, so to speak, the philosophy of the language. Placed next to a verb they lend a relational meaning. And yet they are themselves so lacking in clarity and fixity that not long before writing these lines I had marvelled at the apparent paucity of prepositions in this tongue. In this language the very opposite is true of what occurs in the Quichua tongue in which prepositions are truly beautiful, set off from other words, clear, always in the same position -- that is, placed after their object, for which reason they should be called postpositions and not prepositions.

In Mataco the prepositions are also postpositions, but sometimes they are not placed immediately after the noun but after the verb, and are then often mistakenly supposed to be a form of the conjugation, which error I also fell into. Sometimes also they are placed between the verb root (if we may be allowed to use such a term here) and the flectional tense ending, or between a noun root and the ending which is indicative of plurality or case. One can easily imagine then the horrible confusion confronting the 193 neophyte who is faced with a pile of expressions belonging to a completely new and strange language in which a given word seems to change and be different every time it is used, and for no apparent reason. I for my part confess that for a long time I was unable to understand it and even now I own that I have been able to track down only very few of the rules which govern these changes and which lie hidden among the hundreds of sentences which I have written down.

For example: cue is equivalent to "with"; "we" is, in its abbreviated form nu hén; "with us" is nu cue hén. 192

193 Of course, the problem would not be difficult if one could ask an Indian a question regarding an isolated word and he were able to answer in an absolute way. But the Indian, more times than not, has need always to refer the word to some thing. Thus, when one asks him how one says "foot" in his language he will answer nuccoló if he touches his own foot; accolo if he touches the questioner's foot; toccolo if he touches the foot of some third person. Then there is the confusing problem of [269] different construction. For example: in the above mentioned case of nuccuenen, if one asks the interpreter which is the part which means "with" and which the part corresponding to "us" he will answer (if he is intelligent and knows the language) quite naively: nuc means "with," and cuehen is "us" -- precisely the opposite to what is actually the case.

So it is that there is nothing for it but to go forward slowly and step by step, from the known to the unknown, inquiring first after single words, then after simple, clear sentences, then after less simple but still clear ones, and finally, by dint of repeating the same sentence with slight changes of one word or some one of its parts we shall in all probability, manage, by a simple process of elimination, to arrive at the meaning of each word. And yet even this is not enough for, owing to the properties inherent in this language which I have pointed out elsewhere, owing to the great intellectual distance between the interlocutors, and to the different points of view to which they hold because of mutual ignorance, the wretched student suddenly finds himself face to face with an old word in a new disguise, not knowing why or how or when the change came about and wondering which of the two forms is the

correct or original or basic one. His first reaction is to redouble his 192
efforts and multiply his questions, and thus very often he only re- 193
doubles his confusion until he finally ends up by producing a veritable Babel....

And since we have mentioned Babel, I must remark that the Vielas [sic] Indians translate the word "speak" by the term mbabelon.

But now let us return to our prepositions. It is often said that these prepositions modify the meaning of verbs, but it would be closer to the truth to say that they merely complement them. For example: Tol-l carries with it the idea of movement. When used alone it may mean "to sprout": thus "the grass sprouts" is expressed thus: "grass, tol-l. With the addition of ca at the end it means "to come from," and if ppé is added it means "to fall." Other words are not lacking which express the same thing, however if we want to use tol-l then these particles, which are used as postpositions, must be placed next to the nouns.

It might be supposed, when these prepositions are suffixed to verbs, that they are really prefixes of the objective case; but in spite of the fact that there are some prepositions which are prepositions in every sense of the word, nevertheless, in the above cases they act postpositionally even with verbs, because they modify the latters' endings in accord with their sound, because the verbs thus modified can be used alone -- for other words can be inserted between it (together with its postposition) and the objective case -- which demonstrates that the postposition is attached to the verb.

The main particles, or at least the one which I judge to be so, and which act as do our prepositions are: eckiá -- "until"; tamennej -- "because of"; appé, pé or ppé -- "on top of"; (h)icquió -- "below"; cue, quié, ycque, ecque, ej -- "with" (these are probably one and the same, but modified for reasons of euphony); uuith, uuitd and c-loya, which also [270] mean "with" and are prefixed and are rather to be considered copulative conjunctions; op, ob, "hot," hlot -- "for," and which I have only come across with the meaning of "because," for example: op-toj -- "because" ("for this"); op-qui-lá -- "what for?", while in order to say "why?" they use atddeyéque? which is made up of atde meaning "what" or "how" and yécque -- "with." There is also the postposition ei which is

like the Italian da and the French chez, and is used for movement 192
to or from a place (the latter often being omitted) and is placed in 193
diverse positions. This ei or iei is part of a most elegant verbal expression: miei, meaning "fetch," composed of móh or mmóh which means "go" and ei (the whole having undergone one of the numerous shifts which are so common to this language and used to drive me to desperation). For example: Instead of saying "go and bring me fire" (itoj) they say miéi-itoj, which is "fetch me fire." At first, and even after I had been working on the language for some time, I thought it was a flection.

Another important postposition is ca which means "of" (genitive and ablative) and is suffixed to both verbs and nouns. With these latter it forms a sort of genitive which I find is used somewhat rarely and then only with proper nouns. With personal pronouns it forms the possessives "my," "thy," "his," which in this tongue are genitive -- if they can be called such -- and follow the same rule as genitives do in Italian in which one may just as readily say "mine" as "of me." So from nu (which is a syncopated form of nojlam -- "I") they derive nujcá -- "my"; ah-ca -- "your," luh-cá -- "his," "of him."

There are other postpositions also: cqűi, "within"; lája, which means "without" and is a prefix, and which is a word of negation, for I do not find it prefixed to any words other than those ending in a way which indicates denied possession. For instance, "wifeless" is lája chequó yá, that is "not married."

There are so many others that I cannot possibly recall them all.

The words that express our "with" (ecq, yc-que) lead me to believe that some postpositions govern certain cases and that the varied endings of the latter cause the apparent change in the prefix. For example, "me" is nuya; "with me" is nuyécque -- from which one can easily conclude that a shift has taken place from nuya yécque. And does not the same thing happen in Italian when instead of saying con lo, con la, con li, we say col-lo, col-la, col-li, and in place of di-lo, di-la we say del-lo, del-la?

While on this subject of postpositions, let the reader not marvel on seeing that in Mataco the order is completely different from our own. On the contrary, the shoe is on the other foot for it would be more to the point if he marvelled at our usage, for this business of suffixing the particles which we prefix must be considered as having been the universal norm at one time. 193

So it is that in German and in English, but especially in the former [271] the transposition of prepositions is quite frequent and is one of the elements which most contribute to language elegance -- not to speak of difficulty for those who wish to learn it starting from one of the so-called Latin group. At least the main difficulty lies there in my opinion, without mentioning the dissimilarity of the words themselves. 080

In Latin we have examples of prepositional transposition in the following: nobiscum, vobiscum, tecum, mecum and in the interchangeable position of such words as "versus, it being possible to say "I am going 'Romam versus' and 'versus Romam'." And this sort of usage carries over even to conjunctions so that one may say Senatus atque Populus Romanus or Senatus Populusque Romanus which has remained as Rome's famous motto. In Italian we have meco and feco to which the Spanish pleonasm con-migo and con-tigo correspond.

The examples which I have just cited can, in my opinion, be considered as vestiges of preexistant forms.

In South America's Indian languages, postpositions rather than prepositions are the order of the day, and the contrary is only an exception, at least in Quichua and Guaraní, which have only postpositions, and in Araucano which makes use of both forms. The above mentioned Indians, together with the Matacos and savage Chaco and Central tribes, occupy all of South America. 193 171

May it not be that this form is more useful than ours in contributing to a quick perception of ideas, the main term being expressed first while the changeable particle is attached later? Of course, one of these small particles does not retard appreciation of the relation between the two terms very much, but nevertheless, if we go back and look at the period in which languages had their birth, does it not seem more natural to give first place to the concrete objects and only then express the relationship between them? 600

I think so, and all the more so since one may well believe that the phonetic symbol expressive of a relationship would naturally have come later, together with intellectual progress and, above all, with practice in the manipulation of a new instrument, which would first have leaned heavily on a convention as to the order of words and their modulation.

In this order of things, prepositions would point to a more advanced stage in the genesis of languages as compared to postpositional usage, which would in turn be an advance over mere modulation. And yet modern languages do still make use of convention and modulation to distinguish between relationships.

So, when I say: "The dog kills the tiger," I know -- it being a convention which continual usage has made commonplace -- immediately who is doing the killing [272] and who is being killed. And when I ask: "Does the tiger kill the dog?" ["Kills the tiger the dog" would be the literal translation--Translator] it is because of the same convention, and also because of the intonation, that it will be understood if it is the dog who kills the tiger or vice versa. The declension of words, although it complicates grammatical forms, helps a great deal as regards clarity and, in this regard, Spanish, which sets off the accusative with the preposition *a* (where people are concerned) is ahead of those languages which do not have this distinguishing element -- French uses the relative *qui* for the nominative and *que* for the accusative.

Are intonation and convention absolute elements of progress and, furthermore, is their usage prior to declensions and to the prefixing of these prepositional particles to nouns? A discussion of the problem would be very helpful. I will limit my opinion to saying that the best language is that which combines the greatest expressiveness with the most simplicity, and also that certain individualizing forms necessary for material -- for lack of a better word -- minds must have perforce given place to more simple forms which derive strength from the relative position of words once the mind became capable of perceiving relations, abstractions, and syntheses.

One language which is characterized by consciously "materializing" by means of symbols what we express by relative position and intonation is Quichua, in which there is declension of nouns and suffixing of artificial particles in the interrogative: *chu* at the end 080 of verbs, and *taj* at the end of nouns.

For example: "Do you want?" is *munanqui*? and "water" (accusative) is *yacuta*. If one were to ask: "Do you want water?", this would be *munanquichu yacuta*?; "you are called" is *sutiqui*, and "how" is *ima*. In order to ask "How (what) are you called?" one must say *imataj sutiiqui*, one sound -- if spoken -- or calligraphic symbol -- if written -- being economized.

Let it be noted that in Quichua all particles are suffixed, be they conjunctions, prepositions, interrogatives, declensions. This makes of it an exceptionally [sic] typical language.

Chapter XV

Regarding Conjunctions

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I have not found a single disjunctive conjunction such as "or," "neither," etc. Instead of "or" they appear to use "if not," and in place of "neither" they seem to repeat the verb. For example, they say "Give me water if there is no wine" instead of "give me [273] water or wine." And also: "I have no water, I have no wine" instead of "I have neither water nor wine."

Conversely, they have many words to express copulative conjunctions such as "and," "also," etc., all of which they prefix, as we do. The more important of this type of conjunction are, it seems to me: *uuith* or *uuitd* and *c-loya* which they use for our "with," as has already been seen, and *utcuei*, *isiqiei*, *tdéui*, which correspond to our [blank left here, but probably "and" was intended--Translator].

I notice that *tdéui* is used especially in interrogative phrases such as: "I am leaving, and you?" -- *Nu-ycque, tdeui am*? They have the conditional conjunction "if," which is *quiá* or *cquiá*. When a conditional proposition is placed before the main proposition, the latter is joined to *uuitd*, just as *so* is used after *wenn* in German, or *cosi* in Italian. For example: "If you do not want to, let me know" is *cquia* ("you do not want to") *uuitd* ("let me know").

Chapter XVI

(Conclusion)

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And here I put an end to this and take my leave of the reader. It is my wish, as a practical if indirect outcome of this work, (even if he has only read it piecemeal) that he become imbued with the conviction that man, during the period of his actual life, is potentially the same all over the world. We find him in all places using that complicated instrument which is language and revealing himself through it as possessing all the faculties corresponding to an intellectual maturity capable -- circumstances being favorable -- of attaining a civilized state such as that term is understood today.

If the present day Indians are hostile to civilized society, they are so only as individuals and because of habits contracted during their individual lifetimes, for they have, in spite of this hostility, a "natural" inclination toward it. Proof of this is to be found in those Indian children who have been introduced into our society and who develop in every way as one of our own children would. All this anyone who has lived among these savages will readily understand.

I do not, however, wish to deny or minimize the effects of heredity, nor to accept the fallacy that man came to the earth armed with all the faculties and tools he now has as is recounted of the famous Minerva. Far from it, but I do wish to say that compared to the long series of evolutions through which man has passed up to the present time, so-called civilization represents a mere atom be it [274] in terms of the scant years (a few thousand) which have passed since its appearance and establishment in some scattered parts of the world, or be it because of the quite limited number of individuals and nations who have actually enjoyed its fruits.

It follows also from this that even from this point of view the origin of man harks back to a remote period only hinted at by the study of fossils and of the earth, that is to say, an epoch further removed from us in terms of years than we are separated in terms of days from the Adam of Genesis.

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"Note:--The material contained in the foregoing chapters has been taken from the book Otto Mesi ["Eight Months" --Translator] in which it was set down in a hodgepodge manner and in the order in which the author had come upon it in his travels, which is only natural when one is going about with a note pad in one's hand faithfully setting down facts of interest. This order was not convenient in a work such as the present for many reasons, not the least being ease of reference. However little these Indian languages may lend themselves to rules of a sum, es, fui type, it is always best to try to explain them in grammatical terms familiar to us. Everything is conventional anyway in this realm for, except for cases such as the Volapuk, every language was first spoken and then written and only much later reduced to grammar.

The chapter dealing with pronouns was compiled from loose observations found in several chapters. The importance of this "part of speech," if we may use the term, when speaking of the Mataco language, necessitated a separate chapter, however short and unsatisfactory, in view of the fact that it is the most difficult element for every collector of vocabularies. This difficulty was the cause of the author's not having such a chapter in his original essay, a lack which we have here remedied--The Editor."

[Pages 275-350 of the Spanish text consist of a Mataco vocabulary which has not been translated into English and will be found only in category 116 with the rest of the foreign text. —Analyst]